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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

VOL. VI.

THE

WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON;

BEING HIS

CORRESPONDENCE, ADDRESSES, MESSAGES, AND OTHER PAPERS, OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE,

SELECTED AND PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS;

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By JARED SPARKS.

VOLUME VI.

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PART SECOND

(CONTINUED);

COMPRISING

CORRESPONDENCE

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

RELATING TO

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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CORRESPONDENCE

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

RELATING TO

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Camp, at Paramus, 14 July, 1778.

SIR,

I take the earliest opportunity to advise you, that I have been informed of your arrival on this coast, with a fleet of ships under your command, belonging to his Most Christian Majesty, our great ally. I congratulate you, Sir, most sincerely upon this event, and beg leave to assure you of my warmest wishes for your success. The intelligence of your arrival was communicated to me last night by a letter from the President of Congress, as you will perceive by the enclosed copy.

With respect to the number or force of the British ships of war in the port of New York, I am so unhappy as not to be able to inform you of either, with the precision I could wish, as they are constantly shifting their stations.* It is probable, and I hope it is the case, that your advices on this subject, from some captures you

* Besides the spies in New York, there were persons stationed in Monmouth County near the Hook, who watched the British shipping, and communicated intelligence to General Washington.

may have made, are more certain than those of Congress, or than any I can offer. The number of their transports is reported to be extremely great, and I am persuaded that it is. If possible, I will obtain an accurate state of their ships of war, which I shall do myself the honor of transmitting to you. Before I conclude, I think it proper to acquaint you, that I am now arrived with the main body of the army, immediately under my command, within twenty miles of the North or Hudson's River, which I mean to pass as soon as possible, about fifty miles above New York. I shall then move down before the enemy's lines, with a view of giving them every uneasiness in my power. And I further think it proper to assure you, that I shall upon every occasion feel the strongest inclination to facilitate such enterprises, as you may form, and are pleased to communicate to me. I would submit it to your consideration, whether it will not be expedient to establish some conventional signals, for the purpose of promoting an easier correspondence between us, and for mutual intelligence. If you deem it expedient, you will be so obliging as to fix upon them with Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens, one of my aids, who will have the honor of delivering you this, and of giving you satisfaction in many particulars respecting our affairs, and to whom you may safely confide any measures or information you may wish me to be acquainted with.

I have just received advice, that the enemy are in daily expectation of a provision fleet from Cork, and that they are under great apprehensions lest it should fall into your hands. You will also permit me to notice, that there is a navigation to New York from the sea, besides the one between Sandy Hook and Long Island. This lies between the latter and the State of Connecticut, is commonly known by the name of the Sound,

and is capable of receiving forty-gun ships, though the passage within seven miles of the city at a particular place is extremely narrow and difficult.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Camp, at Haverstraw Bay, 17 July, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving, the night of the 14th instant, your very obliging and interesting letter of the 13th dated off Sandy Hook, with a duplicate of another, dated the 8th at sea.* The arrival of a fleet, belonging to his Most Christian Majesty on our coast, is an event that makes me truly happy; and permit me to observe, that the pleasure I feel on the occasion is greatly increased by the command being placed in a gentleman of such distinguished talents, experience, and reputation, as the Count d'Estaing. I am fully persuaded, that every possible exertion will be made by you to accomplish the important purposes of your destination;

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* In his first letter, on approaching the coast, Count d'Estaing wrote as follows.

"I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the arrival of the King's fleet, charged by his Majesty with the glorious task of giving his allies, the United States of America, the most striking proofs of his affection. If I can succeed in it, nothing will be wanting to my happiness; and this will be augmented by the consideration of concerting my operations with such a general as your Excellency. The talents and the great actions of General Washington have secured to him, in the eyes of all Europe, the truly sublime title of the liberator of America. Accept, Sir, the homage, which every man, and especially every military man, owes you; and be not displeased that I solicit, even in the first instance of intercourse, with military and naval frankness, a friendship so flattering as yours. I will endeavour to render myself worthy of it by my respectful devotion to your country. It is prescribed to me by my orders, and my heart accords with it."

and you may have the firmest reliance, that my most strenuous efforts shall accompany you in any measure, which may be found eligible. I esteem myself highly honored by the desire you express, with a frankness which must always be pleasing, of possessing a place in my friendship. At the same time allow me to assure you, that I shall consider myself particularly happy, if I can but improve the prepossessions you are pleased to entertain in my favor, into a cordial and lasting amity.

On the first notice of your arrival, and previous to the receipt of your letter, I wrote to you by Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens, one of my aids-de-camp, whom I charged to explain to you such further particulars, as were not contained in my letter, which might be necessary for your information, and to whom it was my wish you should confide your situation, in any measures of concert or coöperation, which may be thought to advance the common cause. Major Chouin, who arrived this day at my quarters, has given me a very full and satisfactory explanation on this head; and in return I have freely communicated to him my ideas of every matter interesting to our mutual operations. These, I doubt not, he will convey to you, with that perspicuity and intelligence, which he possesses in a manner, that amply justifies the confidence you have reposed in him.*

* Major Chouin had been sent to Congress with despatches by Count d'Estaing. From Congress he hastened immediately to General Washington's camp, as the bearer of the first letter. "I pray you," said Count d'Estaing in the same letter, "to place the most extensive confidence in all this officer shall tell you on my part. He is a near relation of M. de Sartine. This minister has been long known for his attachment to the common cause. It is less the desire of pleasing a statesman, honored with the confidence of the King, which has determined me to send to you M. de Chouin, than an opinion of his military knowledge, the clearness of his ideas, and the precision with which he will communicate mine."

You would have heard from me sooner in answer to your letter, but I have been waiting for M. de Chouin's arrival to acquaint me with your circumstances and intentions, and, at the same time, I have been employed in collecting information with respect to several particulars, the knowledge of which was essential to the formation of our plans. The difficulty of doing justice by letter to matters of such variety and importance, as those which now engage our deliberations, has induced me to send to you Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, another of my aids, in whom I place entire confidence. He will be able to make you perfectly acquainted with my sentiments, and to satisfy any inquiries you may think proper to propose; and I would wish you to consider the information he delivers as coming from myself.

Colonel Hamilton is accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury, a gentleman of your nation, who has distinguished himself by his zeal and gallantry in the present war with England. He has also with him four captains of vessels, whom I hope you will find very useful, from their knowledge of the coast and harbours, and two persons, who have acted a considerable time in the capacity of pilots, and in whose skill, expertness, and fidelity, from the recommendations I have had, I believe you may place great dependence. I am still endeavouring to provide others of this description, who shall be despatched to you, as fast as they can be found.

With the most ardent desire for your success, and with the greatest respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, Haverstraw, 17 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you of what you have probably heard before this time, that the Admiral Count d'Estaing has arrived upon the coast, and now lies off Sandy Hook, with a fleet of twelve ships of the line and four frigates belonging to his Most Christian Majesty. The design of this fleet is to coöperate with the American armies in the execution of any plans, which shall be deemed most promotive of our mutual interests, against the common enemy. No particular plan is yet adopted, but two seem to present themselves; either an attack upon New York, or one upon Rhode Island. Should the first be found practicable, our force is very well disposed for the purpose; but, should the latter be deemed most eligible, some previous preparations must be made. That we may therefore be ready at all points, and for all events, I desire that you may immediately apply in the most urgent manner, in my name, to the States of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, to make up a body of five thousand men inclusive of what you already have. Establish suitable magazines of provisions, and make a collection of boats proper for a descent. I am empowered to call for the militia for the purpose above mentioned, by a resolve of Congress of the 11th instant. You will not fail to make yourself fully master of the numbers and position of the enemy by land, and of their strength by sea. Should nothing come of this matter, it will answer this valuable purpose, that the enemy will be distracted and deceived, and will probably be off their guard in respect to the defence of New York, should that ultimately be our real design.

You should engage a number of pilots well acquainted with the navigation of the harbour of Newport, and of the adjacent coast, and have them ready to go on board upon signals, which will be thrown out by the French admiral, and of which you will be advised. That you may have the earliest intelligence of his arrival, you should establish a chain of expresses from some commanding view upon the coast to your quarters. I need not recommend perfect secrecy to you, so far as respects any assistance from the French fleet. Let your preparations carry all the appearance of dependence upon your own strength only. Lest you may think the number of five thousand men too few for the enterprise, I will just hint to you, that there are French troops on board the fleet, and some will be detached from this army, should there be occasion.

I have it not in my power to be more explicit at present; but, should the expedition against Rhode Island be finally determined upon, you may depend upon having every previous and necessary information for your government. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 21 July, 1778.

SIR,

I have been favored with yours of yesterday, and soon afterwards General Gates transmitted to me letters from Colonel Ethan Allen to General Stark and himself upon the same subject. I plainly perceive, that this matter is likely to be productive of a serious dispute between the State of New York and the inhabitants of Vermont, and therefore I do not choose to give any determination. I shall transmit the whole

proceedings to Congress, and desire their decision. In the mean time, I have ordered the prisoners to be returned to Fort Arnold, where they are to remain in an easy confinement, under the care of Colonel Malcom, the commanding officer. I am, &c.*

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

White Plains, 22 July, 1778.

SIR,

You are to have the immediate command of that detachment from this army, which consists of Glover's and Varnum's brigades, and the detachment under the command of Colonel Henry Jackson. You are to march them, with all convenient expedition and by the best routes, to Providence in the State of Rhode Island. When there, you are to subject yourself to the orders of Major-General Sullivan, who will have the command of the expedition against Newport, and the British and other troops in their pay on that and the islands adjacent.

* There was in Vermont a court of commissioners, whose business it was to examine suspected persons. If found to be Tories, they were by the laws of Vermont to be sent within the enemy's lines. Eight persons of this description had been forwarded under guard from Bennington to Albany, where General Stark had command. At this time the government of New York maintained a strenuous claim to the territory of Vermont as belonging to that State, and of course would recognise none of the public acts of the inhabitants as legal or justifiable. When the prisoners arrived in Albany, the committee of that city waited on General Stark, and requested him to liberate them, as being amenable only to the laws of New York. But he refused in a manner so decided and peremptory, that it gave offence to the committee, and plainly indicated in what light he viewed the controversy. The prisoners themselves petitioned Governor Clinton for relief. But General Stark sent them down the river under guard, with orders that they should be delivered to General Gates. They had reached the Highlands when the above letter was written.

If on your march you should receive certain intelligence of the evacuation of Rhode Island by the enemy, you are immediately to countermarch for this place, giving me the earliest advice thereof. Having the most perfect reliance on your activity and zeal, and wishing you all the success, honor, and glory, that your heart can wish, I am, with the most perfect regard, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, near White Plains, 22 July, 1778.

SIR,

On Sunday night Mr. Laurens returned; and I found by him, that it was the Count's first wish to enter at Sandy Hook, in order to possess himself of, or to destroy if possible, the whole of the British fleet lying in the bay of New York; and that, for this purpose, he had been much engaged in his inquiries about the depth of water, and in sounding the channel to ascertain it; the result of which was, that the water, from the experiments made, was too shallow at the entrance to admit his large ships; or, if they could be got in, it appeared that it would not be without a great deal of difficulty and risk. After this disappointment, the next important object which seemed to present itself was an attempt against Rhode Island, which the Count inclined to make, unless I should advise the contrary, as soon as the Chimère frigate, which had carried his Excellency Monsieur Gerard into the Delaware, should rejoin him.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, who was well informed of our situation and of my sentiments on every point, was instructed to give the Admiral a full and accurate state of facts, and to acquaint him what aid we could

furnish, and how far we could coöperate with him in case of an attempt either against New York or Rhode Island; and also to obtain his ideas of the plan and system, which he might think ought to be pursued, and to agree upon signals. Previous to my despatching Mr. Hamilton, from the information I received on my inquiries respecting the navigation at the Hook, I was led to suspect, however interesting and desirable the destruction or capture of the British fleet might be, that it was not sufficient to introduce the Count's ships. Under this apprehension, I wrote to General Sullivan on the 17th by express, that an expedition might take place in a short time against Rhode Island, and urged him at the same time to apply to the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut for as many men as would augment his force to five thousand, and also to make every possible preparation of boats, provision, and pilots, as if the event was fixed and certain.

From this time till about twelve o'clock on Sunday the troops continued passing the river, when I crossed with the last division. On Monday afternoon I arrived at this place, in the neighbourhood of which the right and left wing encamped that night, with the second line a few miles in their rear. And here I am happy to add, that their passage across the river was effected without any accident, or without any more delay than necessarily attended the work.

Being persuaded now from the conversation, which I have had with several pilots and masters of vessels, of character, as well as from the accounts of other gentlemen, and Colonel Laurens's report on his return, that the passing of the Count's ships by the Hook would be extremely precarious, if not impracticable, I determined yesterday, which was as soon as it could be done, without waiting for further intelligence upon

the subject, to put two brigades under marching orders. They accordingly marched this morning at two o'clock for Rhode Island, under the particular command of Generals Varnum and Glover respectively, and both under the direction, for the present, of the Marquis de Lafayette. A water conveyance was thought of and wished for the ease of the troops; but, on consideration of all circumstances, such as the difficulty of providing vessels, the change and precariousness of the winds, and the risk from the enemy's ships, their route by land was deemed by far the more eligible. The force with General Sullivan, from the best and latest advice I have been able to obtain, is about three thousand. A detachment under Colonel Jackson will follow Varnum's and Glover's brigades.

Eleven o'clock, P. M. — I this moment received a letter from Colonel Hamilton, who is on his return to the army, dated the 20th, at Black Point. He informs me, that the Count d'Estaing would sail the next evening for Rhode Island, being convinced from actual soundings, that he could not enter his ships. He was anxiously waiting the arrival of the Chimère, but, at all events, meant to sail at the time he mentions. The Admiral has agreed on signals with Mr. Hamilton. Immediately after this letter came to hand, my aid, Mr. Laurens, set out for Providence, having many things to communicate to General Sullivan upon the subject of his coöperation, which neither time nor propriety would suffer me to commit to paper. General Sullivan is directed not to confine the number of his troops to five thousand, but to augment it, if he shall judge it necessary to ensure his success.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, 22 July, 1778.

SIR,

I this moment received the letter, which you did me the honor of writing by Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton. I cannot forbear regretting that the brilliant enterprise, which you at first meditated, was frustrated by physical impossibilities; but I hope that something equally worthy of the greatness of your sentiments is still in reserve for you. Upon the report, made to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens, of the depth of water at Sandy Hook, and the draught of your ships of the line, I thought that no time was to be lost in marching a reinforcement to General Sullivan, that he might be in a situation for a vigorous coöperation. I am happy to find, that we coincided so exactly in the importance of this expedition.*

* Count d'Estaing, in his letter to Congress explaining his operations on the coast, complained of being deceived by the pilot he took from the Delaware River, who assured him, that the squadron could pass around the Hook. "Circumstances required," said he, "that I should reconnoitre the coast myself, and determined me to go almost alone in a boat. By these means we discovered the communication of Shrewsbury River, the extreme difficulties of which cost me an officer, several sailors, and a quantity of rowing-boats. They exposed Colonel Laurens to the most imminent danger of being drowned in bringing me General Washington's despatches, and put him in a situation to prove, that his patriotism and his courage made him brave the most imposing dangers of the sea with the same firmness as the fire of the enemy. Both officers and crews were kept in spirits, notwithstanding their wants and the fatigues of service, by the desire of delivering America from the English colors, which we saw waving, on the other side of a simple barrier of sand, upon so great a crowd of masts. The pilots procured by Colonels Laurens and Hamilton destroyed all illusion. These experienced persons unanimously declared, that it was impossible to carry us in. I offered in vain a reward of fifty thousand crowns to any one, who would promise success. All refused, and the particular soundings, which I caused to be taken myself, too well demonstrated, that they were right." — *Letter, August 26th.*

Mr. Laurens, who will have the honor of delivering you this, will inform you of my opinion relative to the stationing of a ship of the line in the Sound, as well as of other particulars, which I have communicated to him. I shall not therefore employ your attention farther than to assure you, that you have inspired me with the same sentiments for you, which you are so good as to entertain for me, and that it will be my greatest happiness to contribute to the service of our great ally in pursuing our common enemy, and to the glory of an officer, who has on every account so just a claim to it, as the Count d'Estaing.

The amiable manners of Major Chouin would of themselves entitle him to my esteem, if he had not the best of titles in your recommendation; and I beg you to be assured, that nothing on my part shall be wanting to render his stay in camp agreeable. At the same time permit me to add, that your great civilities and politeness to my aids cannot but increase my regard, while they serve to give me additional ideas of your worth. I have now only to offer my sincere wishes for your success in this and every enterprise, and the assurances of the perfect respect and esteem, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

White Plains, 24 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Whether you are indebted to me, or I to you, for a letter, I know not, nor is it a matter of much moment. The design of this is to touch, cursorily, upon a subject of very great importance to the well-being of these States; much more so than will appear at first view.

I mean the appointment of so many foreigners to offices of high rank and trust in our service.

The lavish manner, in which rank has hitherto been bestowed on these gentlemen, will certainly be productive of one or the other of these two evils, either to make it despicable in the eyes of Europe, or become a means of pouring them in upon us like a torrent, and adding to our present burden. But it is neither the expense nor trouble of them that I most dread. There is an evil more extensive in its nature, and fatal in its consequences, to be apprehended, and that is, the driving of all our own officers out of the service, and throwing not only our army, but our military councils, entirely into the hands of foreigners.

The officers, my dear Sir, on whom you must depend for the defence of this cause, distinguished by length of service, their connexions, property, and, in behalf of many, I may add, military merit, will not submit much if any longer to the unnatural promotion of men over them, who have nothing more than a little plausibility, unbounded pride and ambition, and a perseverance in application not to be resisted but by uncommon firmness, to support their pretensions; men, who, in the first instance, tell you they wish for nothing more than the honor of serving in so glorious a cause as volunteers, the next day solicit rank without pay, the day following want money advanced to them, and in the course of a week want further promotion, and are not satisfied with any thing you can do for them.

When I speak of officers not submitting to these appointments, let me be understood to mean, that they have no more doubt of their right to resign, when they think themselves aggrieved, than they have of a power in Congress to appoint. Both being granted, then, the expediency and the policy of the measure remain to

be considered, and whether it is consistent with justice or prudence to promote these military fortune-hunters, at the hazard of your army. They may be divided into three classes, namely, mere adventurers without recommendation, or recommended by persons, who do not know how else to dispose of or provide for them; men of great ambition, who would sacrifice every thing to promote their own personal glory; or mere spies, who are sent here to obtain a thorough knowledge of our situation and circumstances, in the execution of which, I am persuaded, some of them are faithful emissaries, as I do not believe a single matter escapes unnoticed, or unadvised at a foreign court.

I could say a great deal on this subject, but will add no more at present. I am led to give you this trouble at this time, by a *very handsome* certificate showed to me yesterday in favor of M. Neuville, written (I believe) by himself, and subscribed by General Parsons, designed, as I am informed, for a foundation of the superstructure of a brigadiership.

Baron Steuben, I now find, is also wanting to quit his inspectorship for a command in the line. This will be productive of much discontent to the brigadiers. In a word, although I think the Baron an excellent officer, I do most devoutly wish, that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest. Adieu. I am most sincerely yours, &c.*

* Although this letter was written to Mr. Morris in his private capacity, yet it was evidently intended to produce an impression in Congress. Washington was exceedingly embarrassed by the foreign officers, who were admitted into the service by Congress, and then turned over to him to be provided with employment, thus deranging the system of the army, and interfering with native officers.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, near White Plains, 24 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I had yesterday the pleasure to receive your favor of the 18th instant, with the enclosure and packets which you mentioned. I should have been sorry, if you or Monsieur Gerard had found the smallest difficulty in recommending the packets for the Count d'Estaing to my care; and I am happy to inform you, that they will meet with a speedy and safe conveyance to him by an officer, who has set off for Rhode Island. It is very pleasing as well as interesting to hear, that prizes are already finding their way into the Delaware. The event seems the more agreeable, as that navigation, but yesterday as it were, could scarcely contain the enemy's fleet and their numerous captures, which were constantly crowding in. Happy change! and I should hope, that the two prizes, which have entered, will be succeeded by many more. The want of information, that Philadelphia is evacuated, and the countenance which our armed vessels will derive from the French squadron on our coasts, must throw several into our possession.

The second epistle from the commissioners, of which you have so obligingly favored me with a copy, strikes me in the same point of view that it did you. It is certainly puerile; and does not border a little on indecorum, notwithstanding their professions of the regard they wish to pay to decency. It is difficult to determine on an extensive scale, though part of their design is tolerably obvious, what the gentlemen would do. Had I the honor of being a member of Congress, I do not know how I might feel upon the occasion. But it appears to me, that the performance must be re-

ceived with a sort of indignant pleasantry, on account of its manner, and its being truly typical of that confusion into which their prince and nation are thrown.*

By the time this reaches you, I expect the Messieurs Neuville will be in Philadelphia. From the certificates these gentlemen have provided, if I may hazard a conjecture, they are in quest of promotion, particularly the elder. How far their views may extend, I cannot determine; but I dare predict, that they will be sufficiently high. My present intention is to tell you, and with freedom I do it, that Congress cannot be too cautious on this head. I do not mean or wish to derogate from the merit of Messieurs Neuville. The opportunities I have had will not permit me to speak decisively for or against it. However, I may observe, from a certificate I have seen, written by themselves, or at least by one of them, and signed by General Parsons, probably through surprise or irresolution, that they are not bad at giving themselves a good charac-

* President Laurens had written, respecting the commissioners' second letter to Congress, "If I dared to venture an opinion from a very cursory reading of the performance, it would be, that this is more puerile than any thing I have seen from the other side since the commencement of our present dispute, with a little dash of insolence, as unnecessary as it will be unavailing." The puerile part of the letter is that, in which the commissioners attempt to evade the positive requisition of Congress, as the preliminary of a negotiation, namely, an acknowledgment of independence, or a withdrawal of the King's fleets and armies. They consent neither to the one nor the other, and yet pretend that Congress may proceed to negotiate according to their own principles. The indecorous and offensive part is that, wherein the commissioners demand by what authority the Congress assume the prerogative of making treaties with foreign nations, and claim a right to be informed of the particulars contained in the treaties with France, intimating that the same ought also to be known to the people, that they might judge whether such an alliance ought to be a reason for continuing the war. Congress voted, that no answer should be returned to the letter, and ordered it to be published. — *Journals, July 18th.* — See the letter of the commissioners in the *Remembrancer*, Vol. VII. p. 11.

ter; and I will further add, if they meet with any great promotion, I am fully convinced it will be ill borne by our own officers, and that it will be the cause of infinite discontent. The ambition of these men (I do not mean of the Messieurs Neuville in particular, but of the natives of their country and foreigners in general) is unbounded; and the singular instances of rank, which have been conferred upon them in but too many cases, have occasioned general dissatisfaction and general complaint. The feelings of our own officers have been much hurt by it, and their ardor and love for the service greatly damped. Should a like proceeding still be practised, it is not easy to say what extensive murmurings and consequences may ensue. I will further add, that we have already a full proportion of foreign officers in our general councils; and, should their number be increased, it may happen upon many occasions, that their voices may equal if not exceed the rest. I trust you think me so much a citizen of the world, as to believe I am not easily warped or led away by attachments merely local or American; yet I confess I am not entirely without them, nor does it appear to me that they are unwarrantable, if confined within proper limits. Fewer promotions in the foreign line would have been productive of more harmony, and made our warfare more agreeable to all parties. The frequency of them is the source of jealousy and of disunion. We have many, very many, deserving officers, who are not opposed to merit wheresoever it is found, nor insensible to the advantages derived from a long service in an experienced army, nor to the principles of policy. Where any of these principles mark the way to rank, I am persuaded they yield a becoming and willing acquiescence; but, where they are not the basis, they feel severely. I will dismiss the subject, knowing that with

you I need not labor, either in a case of justice or of policy.

Baron Steuben will also be in Philadelphia in a day or two. The ostensible cause for his going is to fix more certainly with Congress his duties as inspector-general, which is necessary. However, I am disposed to believe that the real one is to obtain an actual command in the line as a major-general, and he may urge a competition set up by Monsieur Neuville for the inspector's place on this side of the Hudson, and the denial by him of the Baron's authority, as an argument to effect it, and for granting him the post, as a means of satisfying both. I regard and I esteem the Baron, as an assiduous, intelligent, and experienced officer; but you may rely on it, if such is his view, and he should accomplish it, we shall have the whole line of brigadiers in confusion. They have said but little about his rank as major-general, as he has not had an actual command over them. But when we marched from Brunswic, as there were but few major-generals, and almost the whole of the brigadiers were engaged at the court-martial, either as members or witnesses, I appointed him *pro tempore*, and so expressed it in orders, to conduct a wing to the North River. This measure, though founded in evident necessity, and not designed to produce to the brigadiers the least possible injury, excited great uneasiness, and has been the source of complaint. The truth is, we have been very unhappy in a variety of appointments, and our own officers much injured. Their feelings, from this cause, have become extremely sensitive, and the most delicate touch gives them pain. I write as a friend, and therefore with freedom. The Baron's services in the line he occupies can be important, and the testimonials he has already received are honorable. It will also be material to have

the point of the inspector-generalship, now in question between him and Monsieur Neuville, adjusted. The appointment of the latter, it is said, calls him Inspector-general in the army commanded by General Gates, and under this, as I am informed, he denies any subordination to the Baron, and will not know him in his *official capacity*. There can be but one head. With sentiments of warm regard and esteem, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 26 July, 1778.

SIR,

Baron Steuben will have the honor of delivering you this. I am extremely sorry, that this gentleman's situation and views seem to have determined him to quit the service, in which he has been heretofore and is capable still of being extensively useful. Some discontents, which arose among the officers on account of the powers with which the office was at first vested, induced me to arrange the duties of it upon a plan different from that on which it began. The moving state of the army has for some time past, in a great degree, suspended the exercise of the inspectorship. When the troops marched from Brunswic, the scarcity of general officers, most of them being engaged with the court-martial, either as members or witnesses, occasioned my giving the Baron a temporary command of a division during the march. On our arrival near our present encampment, I intended he should relinquish this charge, and resume his former office, for which purpose a general order was accordingly issued. But I find that he is entirely disinclined to the measure,

and resolves not to continue in the service unless he can hold an actual command in the line.

Justice concurring with inclination constrains me to testify, that the Baron has in every instance discharged the several trusts reposed in him with great zeal and ability, so as to give him the fullest title to my esteem, as a brave, indefatigable, judicious, and experienced officer. I regret there should be a necessity, that his services should be lost to the army; at the same time I think it my duty explicitly to observe to Congress, that his desire of having an actual and permanent command in the line cannot be complied with, without wounding the feelings of a number of officers, whose rank and merits give them every claim to attention; and that the doing of it would be productive of much dissatisfaction and extensive ill consequences. This does not proceed from any personal objections on the part of those officers against the Baron; on the contrary, most of them, whom I have heard speak of him, express a high sense of his military worth. It proceeds from motives of another nature, which are too obvious to need particular explanation, or may be summed up in this, that they conceive such a step would be injurious to their essential rights and just expectations. That this would be their way of thinking upon the subject, I am fully convinced, from the effect which the temporary command given him, even under circumstances so peculiar as those I have mentioned, produced. The strongest symptoms of discontent appeared upon the occasion.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

* This letter was referred to a committee, who brought in a report, which Congress voted should be sent to General Washington for his opinion. In the mean time Congress requested Baron Steuben to repair to Rhode Island, and give his advice and assistance to General Sullivan, and the army under his command. With this request he complied.—*Journals, August 28th. 29th.*

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 27 July, 1778.

DEAR MARQUIS,

This will be delivered to you by Major-General Greene, whose thorough knowledge of Rhode Island, of which he is a native, and the influence he will have with the people, put it in his power to be particularly useful in the expedition against that place; as well in providing necessaries for carrying it on, as in assisting to form and execute a plan of operations proper for the occasion. The honor and interest of the common cause are so deeply concerned in the success of this enterprise, that it appears to me of the greatest importance to omit no step, which may conduce to it; and General Greene on several accounts will be able to render very essential services.

These considerations have determined me to send him on the expedition, in which as he could not with propriety act nor be equally useful merely in his official capacity of quartermaster-general, I have concluded to give him a command in the troops to be employed in the descent. I have therefore directed General Sullivan to throw all the American troops, both Continental, State, and militia, into two divisions, making an equal distribution of each, to be under the immediate command of General Greene and yourself. The Continental troops being divided in this manner with the militia, will serve to give them confidence, and probably make them act better than they would alone. Though this arrangement will diminish the number of Continental troops under you, yet this diminution will be more than compensated by the addition of militia; and I persuade myself your command will not be less agreeable, or

less honorable, from this change in the disposition. I am, with great esteem and affection, dear Marquis, your most obedient servant.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 31 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favored with yours of the 27th instant. Upon opening it, I was much disappointed at not hearing of Count d'Estaing's arrival, who I hope will have made his appearance off the harbour of Newport before this time, as a reinforcement passed Mamaronec the day before yesterday morning.† I wish it had been in my power to spare a larger detachment of Continental

* By this arrangement the command originally intended for the Marquis de Lafayette was to be divided, and the manner in which the intelligence was received by him was so honorable to his feelings, and to the principles upon which he acted, that his reply deserves to be recorded. "I have received your Excellency's favor by General Greene," he writes, "and have been much pleased with the arrival of a gentleman, who, not only on account of his merit and the justness of his views, but by his knowledge of the country and his popularity in this State, may be very serviceable to the expedition. I willingly part with half my detachment, since you find it for the good of the service, though I had great dependence on them. Any thing, my dear General, which you shall order or can wish, will always be infinitely agreeable to me; and I shall always be happy in doing any thing, that may please you or forward the public good. I am of the same opinion as your Excellency, that dividing our Continental troops among the militia will have a better effect, than if we were to keep them together in one wing." — *MS. Letter, Providence, August 6th.*

† As soon as it was decided, that the French fleet could not pass round the Hook, and it was resolved to make a combined attack on the British in Newport, Colonel Laurens was sent to Rhode Island to engage pilots and make arrangements for meeting Count d'Estaing on his arrival. He reached Providence on the 24th of July, and the next day proceeded to Point Judith with an ample number of pilots under the command of Colonel Wall. Eight boats were obtained, suitable for boarding the ships, and well manned. A careful watch was kept along the shore, and every thing conducted with as much secrecy as possible,

troops; but remember I am left very near the enemy, with a force inferior to theirs upon New York and the adjacent Islands. I am much pleased with the account of the readiness you were in, to begin operations, as soon as the Count and the Marquis should arrive; and I flatter myself, that you will receive no small assistance from General Greene, in the department of quarter-master-general, as well as in the military line.*

As you have mentioned the matter of carrying the enemy's works by storm, and have submitted it to my consideration and advice, I will only say, that as I would not, on the one hand, wish to check the ardor of our troops, so I would not, on the other, put them upon attempting what I thought would be hazardous, but with a moral certainty of success. You know the discipline of our men and officers very well, and I hope you, and the general officers under your command, will weigh every desperate matter well before it is carried into execution. A severe check may ruin the expedition, while regular and determined approaches may effect the work, though perhaps they may take a longer time. Upon the whole, I will not undertake at this distance to give orders. I submit every thing to your prudence, and to the good advice of those about you. I am, yours, &c.

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that the enemy might not discover them. The fleet appeared on the 29th, when the pilots went on board. General Sullivan came from Providence, where he was then stationed, boarded the Admiral's ship, and had an interview with him, in which the plan of future operations was arranged. The Marquis de Lafayette likewise paid a visit to Count d'Estaing on the 30th, having reached Providence the day before.

* Although General Sullivan had every thing in readiness at Providence, as far as it depended on him, yet the troops did not arrive so soon as Count d'Estaing, and it was a week before they were prepared to coöperate in making a descent upon Rhode Island. This delay, which was unavoidable, may be considered the principal cause of the defeat of the enterprise; for, if it had been undertaken immediately, it might have been effected before the British fleet arrived.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 3 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am very happy to learn, that your wounds are less painful, and in so fair a way of doing well. The only drawback in the pleasure we receive is, that their condition is still such, as not to admit of your active services this campaign. You will rest assured, that I wish to see you in a situation where you can be of the greatest advantage, and where abilities like yours may not be lost to the public; but I confess myself no competent judge in marine matters to offer advice on a subject so far out of my line; though it is my desire, that you may determine, in this case, in a manner most conducive to your health, honor, and interest.

I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* It would seem, that there was in some quarter a design of offering the command of the American navy to General Arnold, and that he was not disinclined to accept the proposal. "My wounds," said he, "are in a fair way, and less painful than usual, though there is little prospect of my being able to take the field for a considerable time; which consideration, together with that of having been obliged entirely to neglect my private affairs since I have been in the service, has induced me to wish to retire from public business, unless an offer, which my friends have mentioned, should be made to me of the command of the navy; to which my being wounded would not be so great an objection, as it would to remaining in the army. I must beg leave to request your Excellency's sentiments respecting a command in the navy. I am sensible of my inability, and of the great hazard and fatigue attending the office, and that I should enjoy much greater happiness in a private life; still my wishes to serve my country have a greater weight with me, than domestic happiness or ease." — *MS. Letter, July 19th.* Arnold's ruling passion, and the cause of his ruin, was his love of money; which he coveted, not so much from a desire of accumulation, as to obtain the means of display and luxury. He no doubt thought, that the command of the navy would afford him better opportunities for the attainment of this great end of his wishes, than the land service. How far this motive operated, and whether he did not himself originate the idea of his being transferred to the navy, and communicate it to his friends, the reader must judge from the tenor of the above remarks, and the subsequent developements of his character.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 8 August, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor last night of receiving your favor of the 3d instant. I most sincerely sympathize with you in the regret you feel at the obstacles and difficulties you have heretofore encountered. Your case has certainly been one of peculiar hardship; but you justly have the consolation, which arises from a reflection, that no exertions possible have been wanting in you to ensure success, the most ample and adequate to your wishes and to the important expectations from your command. The disappointments you have experienced proceed from circumstances, which no human foresight or activity could control. None can desire more ardently than I do, that the future may compensate for the past, and that your efforts may be crowned with the full success they deserve.

I have just received a letter from Brigadier-General Maxwell, who is stationed in the Jerseys near Staten Island, dated yesterday at nine o'clock in the afternoon. Enclosed are extracts from it, which contain very interesting information.* The terms made use of are so positive and express, that it is natural to conclude the intelligence is well founded. Its importance induces me to lose no time in communicating it. What may be the real design of this movemennt can only be the subject of conjecture. Unless the fleet may have received advice of a reinforcement on the coast, which it is gone to join, with the intention to bend their united force against you, it can scarcely be supposed that Lord Howe will be hardy enough to make any serious attempt with his present inferiority of strength. If he

* Intelligence of Lord Howe's sailing from the Hook with his fleet.

should, it can only be accounted for on the principle of desperation, stimulated by a hope of finding you divided in your operations against Rhode Island. This, however, is a very probable supposition. It is more likely he may hope, by making demonstrations towards you, to divert your attention from Rhode Island, and afford an opportunity to withdraw their troops and frustrate the expedition we are carrying on. I shall not trouble you with any further conjectures, as I am persuaded you will be able to form a better judgment than I can of his intentions, and of the conduct it will be proper to pursue in consequence.

In order to aid in removing the inconveniences you sustain in the article of water, and relieve the sufferings of the brave officers and men under your command, whose patience and perseverance cannot be too highly commended, I have written to Governor Trumbull of the State of Connecticut, requesting his endeavours to collect vessels and load them with water at New London for the use of your fleet. I shall be happy if this application is productive of the desired effect. I send you a New York paper of the 5th, which is not unworthy of attention. Allow me to assure you of the warm respect and regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

White Plains, 10 August, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Your favor of the 6th instant, which came to my hands yesterday, afforded a fresh proof of the noble principles on which you act, and has a just claim to my sincere and hearty thanks. The common cause, of which you have been a zealous supporter, would,

I knew, be benefited by General Greene's presence at Rhode Island, as he is a native of that State, has an interest with the people, and a thorough knowledge of the country; and therefore I accepted his proffered services; but I was a little uneasy, lest you should conceive that it was intended to lessen your command. General Greene did not incline to act in a detached part of the army, merely as quartermaster-general; nor was it to be expected. It became necessary, therefore, to give him a detached command, and consequently to divide the Continental troops. Your cheerful acquiescence in the measure, after being appointed to the command of the brigades which marched from this army, obviated every difficulty, and gave me singular pleasure.

I am very happy to find, that the standards of France and America are likely to be united under your command at Rhode Island. I am persuaded, that the supporters of each will be emulous to acquire honor, and promote your glory upon this occasion. The courier to Count d'Estaing is waiting. I have only time therefore to assure you, that with the most perfect esteem and exalted regard I have the honor to be, my dear Marquis, your obedient and affectionate servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 16 August, 1778.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you, I have received a letter from General Sullivan, a copy of which is enclosed. From this it appears, that the Count d'Estaing had not returned with his squadron on the 13th instant; and there is reason to fear, from the

violence of the weather ever since, that he has not yet got in. This accident has much deranged our views; and I shall be happy if it does not totally defeat our enterprise against Rhode Island. I feel much for the Count. He has been peculiarly unfortunate in the combination of several untoward circumstances to frustrate his plans. The letter addressed to you accompanied mine from General Sullivan. They were both delivered at the same instant; and through inadvertence I broke the seal of yours. Before I had opened it, I discovered the mistake; and the contents have not been seen. This relation, I trust, will aplogize for the measure. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* As the reinforcements from General Washington's army, and other forces intended for the expedition against Newport, had not arrived in Providence, when Count d'Estaing first appeared at Point Judith, it was necessary to delay the attack for several days. It was finally agreed, that the American and French forces should land at the same time near the northern extremity of Rhode Island on the 10th of August. Four thousand French troops were to be landed. To effect this movement, Count d'Estaing passed up through the middle channel with his fleet on the 8th, having been cannonaded in his passage by the batteries from the shore, but without sustaining much injury. On the same day the British evacuated the northern parts of the island, and retired within their lines at Newport. Every thing seemed now in readiness for the debarkation of the troops, and for the intended coöperation; but unfortunately the next day Lord Howe's fleet was seen off Point Judith, standing towards the harbour. The wind being favorable on the morning of the 10th, Count d'Estaing suddenly went out to sea with all his fleet, intending to seek a naval engagement with Lord Howe. A terrible storm, which arose the following night, dispersed the two fleets, prevented a general action, and caused much damage to several of the ships. Meantime Generals Sullivan, Greene, and Lafayette had crossed over to Rhode Island with the American troops, and were extremely disappointed and chagrined at the unexpected departure of their French allies. In the hope that the fleet would soon return, which, indeed, was promised by Count d'Estaing, they marched forward on the 15th, took post within two miles of the enemy's lines at Newport, commenced the erection of batteries, and in a short time opened a cannonade against the British works.

Count d'Estaing was censured for this step by the coöperating army, and by the public generally; but he vindicated himself in a letter to

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 19 August, 1778.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter from General Sullivan, dated the 17th instant, which I just now received, with the letter enclosed. It appears that Count d'Estaing was still out with his fleet, but yet that the General was in high spirits, and entertained the strongest hopes of success. I flatter

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Congress, on the ground that his fleet was in a very dangerous situation the moment Lord Howe's squadron arrived. A large number of the sailors, who were suffering with the scurvy, had just been landed on Connanicut Island, and he had himself gone on shore to meet General Sullivan, leaving orders for the troops to follow, who were to join in the expedition. "The King's ships," said he, "were about to be left disarmed. The destruction of the British shipping at Newport rendered this state of things less imprudent, when the dissipation of the fog discovered to us Lord Howe's fleet approaching the entrance of the port. We counted fourteen ships with two tiers of guns, many frigates, fire-ships, bomb-ketches, in all about thirty-six sail. However unexpected, surprising, and miraculous General Sullivan found the appearance of this fleet, as he did me the honor to inform me in his letter of the 10th of August, its existence was not the less certain. Nothing had announced it to me; not the least intelligence of the dispositions and departure of the English had reached me; the surprise was complete. Two of our ships were out, two others at the north end of the west channel, and our only three frigates at a distance in the eastern channel. The eight ships, with which I had forced the middle channel, were between Rhode Island, thick set with English batteries, and the Island of Connanicut, which I could not occupy without disarming my ships, and which by its extent afforded means of landing the troops, whom the English had brought, and of establishing batteries.

"Such was our maritime disposition. Our ships would shortly have been drawn so near together between these fires, that they would have been battered by a deliberate cannonade from the land, and we should in a short time have had to combat a squadron well protected, and provided with ketches, fire-ships, and all the means which ensure the greatest superiority over ships, that are altogether destitute of them, and which are forced to engage at anchor, and between two shores, in such an unequal combat." — *Letter, August 26th.*

This statement of the case seems at least plausible, and it is perhaps a sufficient justification of the course pursued by Count d'Estaing.

myself they are well grounded, and that in the course of a few days he will announce the entire reduction of the enemy's force on the Island. The declaration respecting Governor Johnstone has been sent in by a flag to the British commissioners.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, 20 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

The conduct of Governor Johnstone has been certainly reprehensible, to say no worse of it; and so I

Another motive, however, a natural and strong desire to try his skill and force in a conflict with Lord Howe's fleet, may be presumed to have operated powerfully. Although the number of his ships was less than that of Lord Howe's, yet in weight of metal and effective strength he had the advantage. The only essential injury sustained by the British at Newport, in consequence of the presence of the French fleet, was the loss of four frigates, and two smaller armed vessels, which were burnt to prevent their being taken. A frigate and another vessel were also sunk with the same design.

According to some historians, Count d'Estaing was displeased and disgusted, that General Sullivan should have landed on the Island before the time appointed, and without consulting him. But his letter to Congress hardly warrants such an inference. "General Sullivan sent me word," he observes, "that he had not waited for the day appointed; that the English, astonished to see me force the entrance of their port, had abandoned the north part of Rhode Island; and that he had made a descent there. I was assured, that he had then not more than two thousand men, and that his situation required prompt succour. A little surprised, I did not hesitate to go and join him myself. Knowing that there are moments, which must be eagerly seized in war, I was cautious of blaming an overthrow of plans, which nevertheless astonished me, *and which in fact merits in my opinion only praise*, (qui cependant m'étonnoit, et qui au fond ne mérite selon mon opinion que des éloges,) although accumulated circumstances might have rendered the consequences very unfortunate." From these particulars it would appear, that, whatever might have been his first impressions, he ultimately approved and commended the course adopted by General Sullivan.

think the world will determine. His letters to Mr. Morris and Mr. Reed are very significant, and the points to which they tend quite evident. They are, if I may be allowed so to express myself, of a pulse-feeling cast; and the offer to the latter, through the lady, a direct attempt upon his integrity. When these things are known, he must share largely in public contempt, and the more so from the opposite parts he has taken.*

* It would seem, that Governor Johnstone, presuming on his former friendships, had taken very unwarrantable liberties in writing to some of the members of Congress, particularly to Robert Morris, Joseph Reed, and Francis Dana. It being rumored, that letters of an improper tendency had been sent to some of the members, an order was passed, that all letters received by any of the members from the British commissioners, or any subject of the King of Great Britain, should be laid before Congress. — *Journals, July 9th.* Letters from Governor Johnstone to the above members were found objectionable, and deemed worthy of special notice. A message from him to Joseph Reed by Mrs. Ferguson, a lady of character, was also considered a direct attempt to bribe him with the proffer of a large sum of money and a high office in his Majesty's gift. Mr. Reed replied, "that he was not worth purchasing, but such as he was, the King of Great Britain was not rich enough to do it." These particulars were regarded in so unfavorable a light by Congress, that they issued a declaration, containing extracts from the letters and other facts, and accompanied by the resolves; "That the contents of the said paragraphs, and the particulars in the said declaration, in the opinion of Congress, cannot but be considered as direct attempts to corrupt and bribe the Congress of the United States of America; that, as Congress feel, so they ought to demonstrate, the highest and most pointed indignation against such daring and atrocious attempts to corrupt their integrity; that it is incompatible with the honor of Congress to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with the said George Johnstone, especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty is interested." — See the proceedings in the *Journals of Congress, August 11th.* The letters are contained in the *Remembrancer*, Vol. VII. p. 8. *et seq.* Governor Johnstone published a counter declaration vindicating himself, and retired from the commission.

In the British Parliament, Governor Johnstone had uniformly professed himself friendly to the Americans. To that circumstance, connected with his conduct as commissioner, General Washington alludes in the closing part of the first paragraph in the above letter.

I am sorry you troubled yourself with transmitting to me copies and extracts from your letters to the French officers, in answer to their applications for rank. Your word, Sir, will always have the fullest credit with me, whenever you shall be pleased to give it upon any occasion; and I have only to regret, that there has not been in every gentleman the same degree of decision and resolution, that you have used in these instances. If there had been, it would not only have contributed much to the tranquility of the army, but preserved the rights of our own officers.

With respect to the brevet commissions, I know many of the French gentlemen have obtained nothing more; that these were intended as merely honorary; and that they are not so objectionable as the other sort. However, these are attended with great inconveniences; for the instant they gain a point upon you, no matter what their primary professions and engagements were, they extend their views, and are incessant in teasing for actual command. The reason for their pressing for printed commissions in the usual form, in preference to the brevets you give them, is obvious. The former are better calculated to favor their schemes, as they impart an idea of real command, and, of consequence, afford them grounds for their future solicitations. I am well pleased with Monsieur Gerard's declaration, and, if he adheres to it, he will prevent many frivolous and unwarrantable applications; for, finding their pursuits not seconded by his interest, many of the gentlemen will be discouraged and relinquish every hope of success. Nor am I insensible of the propriety of your wish respecting our friend, the Marquis. His countrymen soon find access to his heart; and he is but too apt afterwards to interest himself in their behalf, without having a sufficient knowledge of their merit, or a

proper regard to their extravagant views. I will be done upon the subject. I am sure you have been severely punished by their importunities, as well as myself.

The performance ascribed to Mr. Mauduit is really curious as coming from him, when we consider his past conduct. He is a sensible writer, and his conversion at an earlier day, with many others that have lately happened, might have availed his country much. His reasoning is plain and forcible, and within the compass of every understanding.

I have nothing new to inform you of. My public letter to Congress yesterday contained my last advices from Rhode Island. I hope in a few days, from the high spirits and expectations of General Sullivan, that I shall have the happiness to congratulate you on our success in that quarter. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL NELSON, VIRGINIA.

Camp, at White Plains, 20 August, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

In what terms can I sufficiently thank you for your polite attention to me, and agreeable present? And, which is still more to the purpose, with what propriety can I deprive you of a valuable and favorite horse? You have pressed me once, nay twice, to accept him as a gift. As a proof of my sincere attachment to you, I obey, with this assurance, that from none but a gentleman for whom I have the highest regard would I do this, notwithstanding the distressed situation I have been in for the want of one.

I am heartily disappointed at a late resolution of Congress for the discontinuance of your corps, because I

pleased myself with the prospect of seeing you, and many other gentlemen of my acquaintance from Virginia, in camp. As you had got to Philadelphia, I do not think the saving or difference of expense, (taking up the matter even upon that ground, which, under present circumstances, I think a very erroneous one,) was by any means an object suited to the occasion.*

The arrival of the French fleet upon the coast of America is a great and striking event; but the operations of it have been injured by a number of unforeseen and unfavorable circumstances, which, though they ought not to detract from the merit and good intention of our great ally, have nevertheless lessened the importance of its services in a great degree. The length of the passage, in the first instance, was a capital misfortune; for had even one of common length taken place, Lord Howe, with the British ships of war and all the transports in the river Delaware, must inevitably have fallen, and Sir Henry must have had better luck, than is commonly dispensed to men of his profession under such circumstances, if he and his troops had not shared at least the fate of Burgoyne. The long passage of Count d'Estaing was succeeded by an unfavorable discovery at the Hook, which hurt us in two respects; first, in a defeat of the enterprise upon New York, and the shipping and troops at that place; and, next, in the delay occasioned in ascertaining the depth

* Congress had passed a resolve on the 2d of March, recommending to the young men of property and spirit in several of the states to form themselves into volunteer troops of light cavalry, to serve at their own expense, except in the articles of provisions and forage, and to join the main army. General Nelson had accordingly come forward with a troop of this description from Virginia to Philadelphia. Congress thanked them for their "brave, generous, and patriotic efforts in the cause of their country;" but the retreat of the enemy to New York had rendered their services unnecessary, and it was recommended to them to return. — *Journals, August 8th.*

of water over the bar, which was essential to their entrance into the harbour of New York. And, moreover, after the enterprise upon Rhode Island had been planned, and was in the moment of execution, that Lord Howe with the British ships should interpose merely to create a diversion and draw the French fleet from the Island was again unlucky, as the Count had not returned on the 17th to the Island, though drawn off from it on the 10th; by which means the land operations were retarded, and the whole subjected to a miscarriage in case of the arrival of Byron's squadron.

I do not know what to make of the enemy at New York. Whether their stay at that place is the result of choice, or the effect of necessity proceeding from an inferiority in the fleet, want of provisions, or other causes, I know not. But certain it is, that, if it is not an act of necessity, it is profoundly mysterious, unless they look for considerable reinforcements, and are waiting the arrival of them to commence their operations. Time will show.

It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years' manœuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes, that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from, and that the offending party at the beginning is now reduced to the use of the spade and pickaxe for defence. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations. But it will be time enough for me to turn preacher, when my present appointment ceases; and therefore I shall add no more on the doctrine of Providence;

but make a tender of my best respects to your good lady, the secretary, and other friends, and assure you, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Camp, White Plains, 21 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

On Wednesday afternoon I received your favor of the 12th instant by Mr. Hulett, the pilot, who did not arrive at camp till then. I am much obliged by your particular relation of matters, and request that you will continue it from time to time, whenever opportunity will permit. There is one circumstance in your relation, which I was exceedingly sorry to hear.* You will readily know which it is. I wish the utmost harmony to prevail, as it is essential to success; and that no occasions may be omitted on your part to cultivate it.

Your operations have been greatly retarded by the late violent storm; but, as it is now over, I trust things will go on prosperously, and that you will be rejoined by Count d'Estaing, who has been kept out so long by it. Indeed, from General Sullivan's letter of the 17th, I flatter myself you will have made a complete reduction of the enemy's force before this reaches you, and that the next advices I receive will announce it. If the fact is otherwise, let me beseech you to guard against sorties and surprises. The enemy, depend upon it, will fall like a strong man, will make many sallies, and endeavour to possess themselves of or

* Alluding to the differences that had begun to prevail between the American and French officers.

destroy your artillery; and, should they once put the militia into confusion, the consequences may be fatal.

By a letter, which I received yesterday from General Maxwell, enclosing one from Major Howell, whom I have stationed at Black Point for the purpose of observation, it appears certain, that sixteen of Lord Howe's fleet entered the Hook on the 17th; that on that and the preceding day there had been heard severe cannonades at sea, and that it was reported in New York, that a sixty-four gun ship and several transports had been taken by the French squadron. I wish the fact may be so, as to the capture, and that the Count may be with you to give you a narrative of it himself. I cannot learn that Admiral Byron is arrived, nor do I believe that he is. As Major Blodget is in a hurry to proceed, I have not time to add more, than to assure you that I am, with the most perfect esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM BUTLER.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 24 August, 1778.

SIR,

I received yours of the 13th instant dated at Schoharie, giving me an account of events in that quarter since your arrival there. I am very glad to hear of the success of your two scouting parties; and I hope that these checks, though small, and the appearance of a force upon the frontier, will give spirit to our friends, discourage the disaffected, and establish the confidence and friendship of those, who have been frightened or deluded. I have desired General Stark not to send any officer of superior rank to interfere with you in command, as I have great reliance upon your activity

and skill in conducting such an expedition as that, which you are now upon. The enclosed were sent here by some of your friends to be forwarded.

I am, Sir, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

White Plains, 25 August, 1778.

SIR,

If it be practicable and convenient for Congress to furnish me with some specie (gold, as more portable, would be most convenient), valuable purposes I think would result from it. I have always found a difficulty in procuring intelligence by the means of paper money, and I perceive that it increases. The period is critical and interesting, and the early knowledge of an enemy's intention and movements too obvious to need explanation. Having hinted to the committee of Congress when at Valley Forge this want, I address this letter to you *now*, rather as a private than public one; because I do not wish to have the matter again mentioned, if Congress have been apprized of my wants, and find it inconvenient to comply with them. I have the pleasure to inform you, that Colonel Laurens was well on the 23d. I have had a letter from him of that date. With great respect and regard, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

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* Colonel Butler had been sent a few weeks before to the frontiers, where the Indians and Tories were committing depredations. General Washington, in writing soon afterwards to General Stark, who then commanded at Albany, said, "When I sent up Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, with his own regiment and a detachment from Morgan's, I intended he should take the command of all the troops employed upon that service, provided it did not require a general officer. He is not only a very brave, but an experienced officer, especially for such an expedition."

TO MAJOR ALEXANDER CLOUGH.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 25 August, 1778.

SIR,

I received yours of yesterday late last night. I am very anxious to obtain a true account of what is passing in New York, and am endeavouring to send in a variety of persons from different quarters, who have no connexion or communication with each other. By comparing their accounts I shall be able to form a pretty good judgment. I have desired them to attend particularly to some matters of which the enclosed are the heads. I shall be obliged to you to procure some intelligent person to go into the city, and as it will be unsafe to give him a written paper, I desire you to impress the enclosed upon his memory by repeating them to him. When he returns, let me know his answers to each head. If the person that goes in cannot make an excuse of business, he must be allowed to carry a small matter of provisions, and bring something out, by way of pretext. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 28 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly anxious to hear the determination of yourself and the general officers upon the great reverse of your prospects, since the French fleet left you.* I however think it incumbent upon me to inform

* After suffering greatly in the storm, the French fleet appeared again off Newport, August 20th. General Greene and the Marquis de Lafayette went on board Count d'Estaing's ship, and endeavoured to persuade him to unite again in an attack upon the enemy. A council

you, that from a variety of intelligence Lord Howe put to sea again on Tuesday. His design no doubt is to attempt the relief of Newport, which will be easily effected, either by throwing in a reinforcement or withdrawing the garrison; as I take it for granted the French fleet would not have returned, had your protest reached them. I also yesterday received information from Long Island, that looks like a great and general move among the British army. The real intent I have not been able to learn, but I think part of it must be meant to coöperate with their fleet, especially as many transports are drawing into the Sound. You will more than probably have come to a decisive resolution, either to abandon the enterprise, or to make the attack, long before this reaches you; but, lest you should not, I have given you all the information that I have been able to obtain, that you may judge more fully of the propriety of remaining upon the Island under such appearances. The wind is now contrary, and, if it continues a short time, this will reach you before the transports can, should they be bound eastward.

Supposing you should remove from the Island, I desire you will keep as many of your troops together as you possibly can. We do not know the views of

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of war was held, which decided against it. Greene and Lafayette used all their powers of argument and persuasion to bring about a different result, but without effect. The whole fleet sailed from Rhode Island, and proceeded to Boston harbour for the purpose of repairs. This was a double disappointment and mortification to the American army. Under the present circumstances, and with the momentary expectation of a reinforcement to the enemy, it being impossible to prosecute the siege with any hope of success, General Sullivan withdrew his forces in the night of the 28th of August, and marched to the north part of the Island. He was pursued by the enemy, and an action took place the next day. The Americans kept their ground till night, when they retreated to the main land without any molestation from the British.

the enemy. Should they be for the eastward, you may be able with a force already collected, and the assistance of the militia, to keep them from making much progress, until a reinforcement from this army would join you. I will just add a hint, which, made use of in time, may prove important, and answer a very salutary purpose. Should the expedition fail, through the abandonment of the French fleet, the officers concerned will be apt to complain loudly. But prudence dictates, that we should put the best face upon the matter, and to the world attribute the removal to Boston to necessity. The reasons are too obvious to need explaining. The principal one is, that our British and internal enemies would be glad to improve the least matter of complaint and disgust between us and our new allies into a serious rupture. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 28 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

The unfortunate circumstance of the French fleet having left Rhode Island at so critical a moment, I am apprehensive, if not very prudently managed, will have many injurious consequences, besides merely the loss of the advantages we should have reaped from succeeding in the expedition. It will not only tend to discourage the people, and weaken their confidence in our new alliance, but it may possibly produce prejudices and resentments, which may operate against giving the fleet such zealous and effectual assistance in its present distress, as the exigence of affairs and our true interests demand. It will certainly be sound policy to combat these effects, and, whatever private opinions may be

entertained, to give the most favorable construction of what has happened to the public, and at the same time to exert ourselves to put the French fleet, as soon as possible, in a condition to defend itself and be useful to us.

The departure of the fleet from Rhode Island is not yet publicly announced here; but, when it is, I intend to ascribe it to necessity, from the damage suffered in the late storm. This, it appears to me, is the idea, which ought to be generally propagated. As I doubt not the force of these reasons will strike you equally with myself, I would recommend to you to use your utmost influence to palliate and soften matters, and to induce those, whose business it is to provide succours of every kind for the fleet, to employ their utmost zeal and activity in doing it. It is our duty to make the best of our misfortunes, and not to suffer passion to interfere with our interest and the public good.

By several late accounts from New York, there is reason to believe the enemy are on the point of some important movement. They have been some days past embarking cannon and other matters. Yesterday a hundred and forty transports fell down to the Hook. These and other circumstances indicate something of moment being in contemplation. Whether they meditate any enterprise against this army, mean to transfer the war elsewhere, or intend to embrace the present opportunity of evacuating the continent, is as yet uncertain. If they have a superior fleet on the coast, it is not impossible they may change the seat of the war to the eastward, endeavouring by a land and sea cooperation to destroy or possess themselves of the French fleet. With an eye to an event of this kind, I have desired General Sullivan, if he makes good his

retreat from the Island, to disband no more of his troops than is necessary; and I would recommend to you to have an eye to it likewise, and, by establishing signals and using other proper precautions, to put things in a train for calling out your militia at the shortest notice. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 1 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

The disagreement between the army under your command and the fleet has given me very singular uneasiness.* The continent at large is concerned in

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* As soon as the French fleet returned to the coast of Rhode Island after its dispersion in the storm, Count d'Estaing wrote the following letter to General Sullivan.

"Our cables were cut, and the fire of the batteries, which we were about to pass to attack the enemy's squadron, had commenced, when I received the letter, which you did me the honor to write on the 9th instant. It was not then possible for me to answer it any otherwise than by pursuing the English fleet, and preventing it from landing any succours. The Count de Cambis has been charged to acquaint you with my present situation, and of the necessity which compels me to go to Boston. I could not myself discharge this melancholy duty, because with a vessel deprived of all her masts, her rudder broken and unshipped, one is extremely uncertain of his destiny. I have nevertheless as yet the consolation of being sufficiently master of it to fulfil the promise verbally made, that I would in any event return to you dead or alive. This promise, and the advantage, which our momentary presence may render to you, have caused me to shut my eyes to all other considerations. In this perhaps I have been imprudent, and my zeal may have blinded me. I have thought that I could not run too great a hazard to prove, in the name of the King, how much his Majesty is attached to his allies; but I should be culpable in my duty to America herself, if I could for a moment think of not preserving a squadron destined for her defence. I regretted to Colonel Fleury, that you should have landed on the Island a day before the time agreed upon between us, and I should be greatly afflicted to know, that you are in danger. I was informed, that you had then only two thousand men. To decide

our cordiality, and it should be kept up by all possible means, consistent with our honor and policy. First impressions you know are generally longest remembered, and will serve to fix in a great degree our national character among the French. In our conduct towards them we should remember, that they are a people old in war, very strict in military etiquette, and apt to take fire, where others scarcely seem warmed. Permit me to recommend, in the most particular manner, the cultivation of harmony and good agreement, and your endeavours to destroy that ill humor, which may have got into the officers. It is of the greatest importance also, that the soldiers and the people should know nothing of the misunderstanding, or, if it has reached

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upon your motives is a wrong, which I have not committed. I have refrained from censure; and the twelve thousand men now under your command will probably prove the correctness of the step by a success, which I desire as a citizen, and an admirer of your bravery and talents." —*MS. Letter, August 21st.*

Before this letter was despatched, Count d'Estaing received one from General Sullivan, written the day preceding, and immediately after the squadron appeared, in which he urged the Admiral to unite in an attack upon the enemy. This he answered in a postscript, declining the proposal, and giving as his reasons the disabled and dispersed condition of his fleet, the naval strength of the enemy, the chance that reinforcements might at any moment arrive, and the positive orders of the King, that, in case of any disaster, or of being pursued by a superior force, his squadron should rendezvous in the harbour of Boston. Greene and Lafayette went on board, and, as we have seen, were unable to change this purpose.

As a last resort the officers bethought themselves of another expedient. A paper was written in the form of a *Protest*, and signed by all the general officers except Lafayette. It was rumored, that the Count himself was in favor of remaining at Newport, but that he was overruled by his officers, who had no good will towards him because he originally belonged to the land service, and were actually in a cabal to ruin him. This was the report; and it was supposed, that a spirited protest of all the American officers might have the effect to change the decision of the council of war. In the mean time the fleet had sailed, and the protest, dated the 22d of August, was sent off by Colonel Laurens, who soon overtook Count d'Estaing's ship. The paper consisted

them, that ways may be used to stop its progress and prevent its effects.

I have received from Congress the enclosed, by which you will perceive their opinion with regard to keeping secret the protest of the general officers. I need add nothing on this head. I have one thing however more to say. I make no doubt but you will do all in your power to forward the repair of the Count's fleet, and render it fit for service, by your recommendations for that purpose to those, who can be immediately instrumental. I am, dear Sir, &c.

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of a recapitulation of the principal arguments against the departure of the French fleet; but unfortunately parts of it were so worded as to give offence, and particularly the closing paragraph. "For the reasons above assigned," say the officers, "we in the most solemn manner protest against the measure, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intentions of his Most Christian Majesty and to the interests of his nation, destructive in the highest degree of the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations." The performance throughout was marked by a tone of complaint and censure, which was by no means suited to the occasion, and could hardly have been put forth, had time been allowed for more cool reflection.

When the protest, and the correspondence relating to the subject, were read in Congress, it was ordered, that their contents should be kept secret, but that the President should communicate them to the French minister, M. Gerard, informing him at the same time of the injunction of secrecy. It was likewise ordered, that General Washington should take every measure in his power to prevent the *Protest* from being made public. — *Secret Journal*, Vol. I. p. 89.

Colonel Laurens, in a letter to General Washington, said, "The Count's sensibility was much wounded by the manner in which the American *Protest* was delivered to him. He declared, that this paper imposed on the commander of the King's squadron the painful but necessary law of profound silence." Again, Colonel Laurens added, "I foretold to the Marquis the influence, which the Count's departure from the road of Newport would probably leave upon the minds of the people, and the danger of its reviving those absurd prejudices, which we inherited from the British nation. Unhappily the mischief has become more extensive, by the unguarded expressions of some men of rank, who listened to their chagrin rather than to good policy. Reflection, however, begins to induce a more cautious behaviour, and I am in hopes, that the confidence of the people in our new allies will be restored." — *MS. Letter, Sept. 2d.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 1 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your several letters, the last of which was of the 22d of August. I have not now time to take notice of the arguments, that were made use of for and against the Count's quitting the harbour of Newport, and sailing for Boston. Right or wrong, it will probably disappoint our sanguine expectations of success, and, what I esteem a still worse consequence, I fear it will sow the seeds of dissension and distrust between us and our new allies, unless the most prudent measures are taken to suppress the feuds and jealousies, that have already arisen. I depend much upon your temper and influence to conciliate that animosity, which I plainly perceive, by a letter from the Marquis, subsists between the American officers and the French in our service. This, you may depend, will extend itself to the Count, and to the officers and men of his whole fleet, should they return to Rhode Island; unless, upon their arrival there, they find a reconciliation has taken place. The Marquis speaks kindly of a letter from you to him on the subject. He will therefore take any advice coming from you in a friendly light; and, if he can be pacified, the other French gentlemen will of course be satisfied, as they look up to him as their head. The Marquis grounds his complaint upon a general order of the 24th of August, the latter part of which is certainly very impolitic, especially considering the universal clamor that prevailed against the French nation.*

* After alluding to the departure of the French fleet, and to the disagreeable situation in which the army was left by being thus deserted, the order added, "The General yet hopes the event will prove America

I beg you will take every measure to keep the protest, entered into by the general officers, from being made public. The Congress, sensible of the ill consequences that will flow from the world's knowing our differences, have passed a resolve to that purpose. Upon the whole, my dear Sir, you can conceive my meaning better than I can express it; and I therefore fully depend upon your exerting yourself to heal all private animosities between our principal officers and the French, and to prevent all illiberal expressions and reflections, that may fall from the army at large.

I have this moment received a letter from General Sullivan of the 29th of August, in which he barely informs me of an action upon that day, in which he says we had the better, but does not mention particulars.

I am, &c.

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able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining." Two days afterwards, however, General Sullivan thought it expedient, upon the pressing request of Lafayette, to counteract the impression, which this order was found to produce, particularly on the French officers in the army. In the public orders of the 26th of August, he said, "It having been supposed by some persons, that, by the orders of the 24th instant, the Commander-in-chief meant to insinuate, that the departure of the French fleet was owing to a fixed determination not to assist in the present enterprise; and as the General could not wish to give the least color to ungenerous and illiberal minds to make such an unfair interpretation, he thinks it necessary to say, that, as he could not possibly be acquainted with the orders of the French Admiral, he could not determine whether the removal of the fleet was absolutely necessary or not, and therefore did not mean to censure an act, which those orders might render absolutely necessary." This was an awkward explanation, and only proved, that the occasion for it should have been avoided.

In a circular to the officers, dated August 23d, requesting their opinion in writing as to the course that should be pursued, General Sullivan said; "The number of our army amounts to eight thousand one hundred and seventy-four, rank and file, exclusive of eight hundred artillerymen, the whole exceedingly well officered; and a reinforcement of three thousand men will probably be here in a few days." So much was the army disheartened, however, that between two and three thousand volunteers went off soon afterwards.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

White Plains, 1 September, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have been honored with your favor of the 25th ultimo by Monsieur Pontgebaud, and I wish my time, which at present is taken up by a committee of Congress, would permit me to go fully into the contents of it. This, however, it is not in my power to do. But in one word let me say, I feel every thing that hurts the sensibility of a gentleman, and consequently upon the present occasion I feel for you and for our good and great allies the French. I feel myself hurt, also, at every illiberal and unthinking reflection, which may have been cast upon the Count d'Estaing, or the conduct of the fleet under his command; and lastly I feel for my country. Let me entreat you, therefore, my dear Marquis, to take no exception at unmeaning expressions, uttered perhaps without consideration, and in the first transport of disappointed hope. Everybody, Sir, who reasons, will acknowledge the advantages which we have derived from the French fleet, and the zeal of the commander of it; but, in a free and republican government, you cannot restrain the voice of the multitude. Every man will speak as he thinks, or, more properly, without thinking, and consequently will judge of effects without attending to the causes. The censures, which have been levelled at the officers of the French fleet, would more than probably have fallen in a much higher degree upon a fleet of our own, if we had one in the same situation. It is the nature of man to be displeased with every thing, that disappoints a favorite hope or flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them to condemn without investigating circumstances.

Let me beseech you therefore, my good Sir, to afford a healing hand to the wound, that unintentionally has been made. America esteems your virtues and your services, and admires the principles upon which you act. Your countrymen in our army look up to you as their patron. The Count and his officers consider you as a man high in rank, and high in estimation here and also in France; and I, your friend, have no doubt but you will use your utmost endeavours to restore harmony, that the honor, glory, and mutual interest of the two nations may be promoted and cemented in the firmest manner. I would say more on the subject, but am restrained for the want of time; and therefore shall only add, that, with every sentiment of esteem and regard, I am, my dear Marquis, &c.*

* Before the retreat of General Sullivan from Newport, it was thought advisable to make one more effort to persuade Count d'Estaing to return, and, at the pressing solicitations of the board of general officers, Lafayette went to Boston for that purpose. He made the utmost despatch, in going and returning, but he did not reach the army again till the night after the battle. "That there has been an action fought," he said, in writing to General Washington, "where I could have been, and where I was not, is a thing which will seem as extraordinary to you, as it seems to myself." He arrived while the army was evacuating the Island, and just in time to bring off the rear-guard and pickets, which he performed in a manner that gained him applause. Congress passed a resolve, thanking General Sullivan and the officers and troops under his command for their conduct in the action and retreat; and the president was specially "requested to inform the Marquis de Lafayette, that Congress have a due sense of the sacrifice he made of his personal feelings in undertaking a journey to Boston, with a view of promoting the interests of these States, at a time when an occasion was daily expected of his acquiring glory in the field; and that his gallantry in going on Rhode Island when the greatest part of the army had retreated, and his good conduct in bringing off the pickets and out-sentries, deserve their particular approbation." — *Journals, September 9th.*

Lafayette had advised retreating from Newport. On the 24th of August he gave his opinion in writing to General Sullivan as follows. "I do not approve of continuing the siege. The time of the militia is out, and they will not longer sacrifice their private interest to the common cause. A retreat is the wisest step."

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 2 September, 1778.

SIR,

The importance of the fleet under your command to the common cause, and the interest I take in your personal concerns, would not permit me but to be deeply affected with the information of the disappointment and injuries you sustained in the late unfortunate storm. I flatter myself, and I most ardently hope, that my countrymen will exert themselves to give you every aid in their power, that you may, as soon as possible, recover from the damage you have suffered, and be in a condition to renew your efforts against the common enemy. I am informed there is a considerable quantity of provisions on the way from Philadelphia for the use of your fleet. A part crossed the North River several days since. So far as it shall depend upon me, you may be assured, that every method will be taken to forward them with despatch. I have the honor, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

White Plains, 4 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Feeling myself interested in every occurrence that tends to the honor of your worthy son, and sensible of the pleasure it must give you to hear his just praise, I take the liberty of transcribing a paragraph of General Greene's letter to me, giving some account of the conduct of particular officers in the late action on Rhode Island.

"Our troops behaved with great spirit, and the brigade of militia under the command of General Lovell advanced with great resolution, and in good order,

and stood the fire of the enemy with great firmness. Lieutenant-Colonel Livingston, Colonel Jackson, and Colonel Henry B. Livingston did themselves great honor in the transactions of the day; but it is not in my power to do justice to Colonel Laurens, who acted both the general and the partisan. His command of regular troops was small, but he did every thing possible to be done with their numbers."

Major Morris affords me too good an opportunity of returning your paper parcel of gold, sent to me by the messenger Jones, to pass it by. I therefore embrace it. A more particular acknowledgment of and thanks for this favor shall be conveyed in my next. At present I shall only assure you, and with most perfect truth I can do it, that, with every sentiment of affection and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 4 September, 1778.

SIR,

Congress may rely, that I will use every means in my power to conciliate any differences, that may have arisen in consequence of Count d'Estaing's going to Boston, and to prevent a publication of the protest upon the occasion. Several days before the receipt of the resolution, I had written to the eastward, urging the necessity of harmony, and the expediency of affording the Admiral every assistance to refit his ships. This I repeated after the resolution came to hand; and I have also taken an opportunity to request all the general officers here to place the matter in the most favorable point of view, whenever they hear it mentioned.

The five hundred guineas, which Congress were pleased to order, came safe to hand, and shall be appropriated to the purposes they intended, and as the exigency of the service may require. For want of supplies of this sort, we have been very deficient in intelligence in many important and interesting points. In some cases, no consideration in paper money has been found sufficient to effect even an engagement to procure it; and, where it has been otherwise, the terms of service, on account of the depreciation, have been high, if not exorbitant.

The designs of the enemy, as to their future movements, remain yet entirely unknown; but the expectation of their leaving the continent is daily decreasing. The hurricane season seems opposed to their going to the West Indies; and the passage to Europe in a little time will become more and more dangerous. Besides these, there is another circumstance, of some weight if true, to induce a belief that they mean to stay. It appears by the papers, that part of the regiments lately raised in Britain are ordered to Halifax. If the troops here were intended to be recalled, it would seem that some of them would be sent to reinforce that garrison sooner than troops from England or Scotland; and hence I think it may be presumed, that another campaign will take place in America, especially if the administration are disappointed in their expectations from the commission.

Where the theatre of war may be, must be a matter of conjecture. But, as it is an acknowledged fact, that an army acting in the eastern States must derive flour for its support from those more western, I submit to Congress the expediency, and in my opinion the necessity, of establishing, without loss of time, magazines of this article at convenient places (removed from the

Sound) in Connecticut and Massachusetts. I am the more induced to wish an early consideration of this point, as, by a sudden move of the army, should events make it necessary, the departments of commissary and quartermaster would be greatly distressed. Nor would such magazines, I should imagine, be attended with any considerable loss, though the army should not operate in that quarter, as the flour would answer occasionally for our shipping, and the surplus might, in all probability, be otherwise readily disposed of.

Six o'clock, P. M. — I this minute received a letter from General Sullivan, of which the enclosure is a copy. I shall be exceedingly happy, if a perfect reconciliation has taken place between him and the Count, and all the officers. His letter will show some of the reasons, that led to the protest, and that it was the hope of our officers, that it would have operated as a justification to the Admiral to return, against the sentiments of his council, especially as it coincided, it is said, with his own inclination. I had these reasons from another hand when the protest first came. I have the honor, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 5 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you much for your very polite and friendly appeal, upon the subject of half-bounty in solid coin.*

* The Continental bounty for each recruit, who enlisted for three years or during the war, was twenty dollars. It had been proposed by some of the members of Congress to pay one half in specie, and the other half in paper currency. The idea was abandoned in consequence of the above representations of the Commander-in-chief. But Congress voted an augmentation of ten dollars to the bounty already given, which was to be applied in such cases as General Washington should deem expedient. — *Journals, September 8th.*

The measure, I have no doubt, would produce an instant benefit, so far as the engaging of drafts might be concerned. But I am certain, that many mischievous and pernicious consequences would flow from it. It would have a tendency to depreciate our paper money, which is already of little value, and give rise to infinite difficulties and irremovable inconveniences. Nothing after this would do but gold or silver. All would demand it, and none would consider the impracticability of its being furnished. The soldiers, seeing the manifest difference in the value between that and paper, and that the former would procure at least five or six fold as much as the latter, would become dissatisfied. They would reason upon the subject, and, in fine, cast their views to desertion at least, as a very probable and the only expedient from whence it might be derived, and similar and greater advantages arise.

As the express is now waiting, I will not enter upon a long detail, nor into an enumeration of the evils, that would result from the grant. I am satisfied they would be many, and of an obstinate and injurious kind, and that they would far overbalance, in their operation and effect, any present good. We have no prospect of procuring gold and silver to discharge more than a scruple of our demands. It is therefore our interest and truest policy, as far as it may be practicable, on all occasions to give a currency and value to that, which is to be the medium of our internal commerce and the support of the war. I am, &c.*

* Washington wrote to Richard Henry Lee on the same subject as follows. — "An advance in silver dollars, of part of the bounty money, might facilitate the business of recruiting; but I conceive, that it would be attended with very pernicious consequences; not from the cause you speak of, to wit, discontenting the other soldiers, but from another source, namely, opening the eyes of the whole, and setting them to reasoning upon the difference between specie and paper. At present they know,

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL JACOB BAYLEY.*

White Plains, 11 September, 1778.

SIR,

I am to request, that you immediately employ proper persons to gain the most authentic intelligence from Canada of the several matters hereafter mentioned, namely;

1. What force is now in arms in that country?
2. Have any reinforcements arrived in Canada the summer past, and are any expected this season?
3. In what state of defence are the garrisons, and how are the troops posted in that country?
4. Are any Canadians in arms there; if so, are they compelled to it, or is it from their own choice, and what number?
5. What are the general sentiments of the people with respect to American politics, and of the clergy in particular?
6. What is the disposition of the Indians in the neighbourhood of Canada?
7. Who is governor and principal magistrate in that country?

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that every comfort and necessary of life is insufferably dear, but do not inquire much after the causes; and, having no specie among them to fix the comparison, they do not attribute it to the depreciation of the paper money; but let them have ocular proof, that they can purchase as much with one silver as with four or five paper dollars, and have forestallers and the disaffected at work among them in purchasing up the specie, while the latter class of people are painting in lively colors the difference, and using at the same time every art in their power to poison their minds and sow the seeds of discontent, and then judge of the event. At any rate, I think the experiment would be dangerous, and ought not to be tried but as the dernier resort, lest by obviating one evil a greater be involved." — *September 23d.*

* General Bayley was an officer in the militia, who resided at Newbury, on the Connecticut River, which was then a frontier town.

8. Is there a plenty of short crop there, and what is the price of grain?

9. Have the Canadians been disarmed by any authority from government or not?

10. Whether the Canadians would choose to unite with the Independent States of America?

If you find a favorable report, from credible people, on the matters herein mentioned, your situation being so distant from hence, you may in the month of November next employ a part of Colonel Bedel's regiment, should it be continued, or a small number of good men, in cutting a road from your house into Canada, which you with others have reported to me to be practicable. Your reasonable expenses in this service will be allowed. You will, from time to time, transmit to me an account of your proceedings, with all the intelligence you shall collect. I am, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, 11 September, 1778.

SIR,

I have had the honor of receiving your letter of the 5th instant, accompanied by a copy of two letters to Congress and General Sullivan. The confidence, which you have been pleased to show in communicating these papers, engages my sincere thanks. If the deepest regret, that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster, which human prudence was incapable of foreseeing or preventing, can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured, that the whole continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation to you to reflect, that the thinking part of mankind do not form their

judgment from events; and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions, which deserve success, and those which have been crowned with it. It is in the trying circumstances to which your Excellency has been exposed, that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that a general's character is better known, than in the moment of victory. It was yours, by every title that can give it; and the adverse element, which robbed you of your prize, can never deprive you of the glory due to you. Though your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting, that you have rendered essential services to the common cause.

I exceedingly lament, that, in addition to our misfortunes, there has been the least suspension of harmony and good understanding between the generals of allied nations, whose views must, like their interests, be the same. On the first intimation of it, I employed my influence in restoring what I regard as essential to the permanence of a union founded on mutual inclination, and the strongest ties of reciprocal advantage. Your Excellency's offer to the Council of Boston had a powerful tendency to promote the same end, and was a distinguished proof of your zeal and magnanimity.*

* When Lafayette arrived in Boston from Rhode Island, Count d'Estaing's fleet had just entered the outer harbour. The Council of Massachusetts was convened, and a conference was held between that body and Count d'Estaing and Lafayette, on the subjects of providing for the fleet and of reinforcing General Sullivan's army. Count d'Estaing wrote to Washington, — "I offered and was ready, at the head of a regiment, to go and serve under General Sullivan, as I formerly did under Marshal Saxe, in the war which terminated in 1748. I should not have taken this step with the idea of strengthening an army with such a handful of men, nor of proving what is already known, that the French nation can sacrifice life with a good grace; but I was anxious to demonstrate, that my countrymen could not be offended by a sudden

The present superiority of the enemy in naval force must for a time suspend all plans of offensive coöperation between us. It is not easy to foresee what change may take place by the arrival of succours to you from Europe, or what opening the enemy may give you to resume your activity. In this moment, therefore, every consultation on this subject would be premature. But it is of infinite importance, that we should take all the means that our circumstances will allow for the defence of the squadron, which is so precious to the common cause of France and America, and which may have become a capital object with the enemy. Whether this really is the case, can be only matter of conjecture. The original intention of the reinforcement sent to Rhode Island was obviously the relief of the garrison at that post. I have to lament, that, though seasonably advised of the movement, it was totally out of my power to counteract it. A naval force alone could have defeated the attempt. How far their views may since have been enlarged, by the arrival of Byron's fleet,

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expression of feeling, and that he, who had the honor of commanding them in America, was and would be at all times one of the most devoted and zealous servants of the United States." — *MS. Letter, September 5th.*

Count d'Estaing likewise wrote a letter to General Sullivan, of which Lafayette was the bearer, and in which the Count alluded to the protest only by saying, that it was of such a nature as to impose on the commander of the King's squadron the necessity of passing it over in silence. He then mentioned the proposal he had made to the Council, adding that no offence had been given, which, under the circumstances of the case, would affect his conduct. "To prove this," said he, "is one of the strongest motives, which has determined me to place myself under your orders, as soon as I shall have been honored with a positive answer from the Council. My opinion upon the measures to be taken need never restrain yours. It shall not only be subject to yours, but even remain unrevealed whenever you shall not require me to give it." — *August 29th.* Here this unpleasant affair terminated, as the battle on Rhode Island put an end to any further operations in that quarter.

your Excellency will be best able to judge. Previous to this event, I believe General Clinton was waiting orders from his court for the conduct he was to pursue; in the mean time embarking his stores and heavy baggage, in order to be the better prepared for a prompt evacuation, if his instructions should require it.*

But as the present posture of affairs may induce a change of operations, and tempt them to carry the war eastward for the ruin of your squadron, it will be necessary for us to be prepared to oppose such an enterprise. I am unhappy, that our situation will not admit of our contributing more effectually to this important end; but I assure you, at the same time, that whatever can be attempted, without losing sight of objects equally essential to the interest of the two nations, shall be put in execution.

A candid view of our affairs, which I am going to exhibit, will make you a judge of the difficulties under which we labor. Almost all our supplies of flour, and no inconsiderable part of our meat, are drawn from the States westward of Hudson's River. This renders a secure communication across that river indispensably necessary, both to the support of your squadron and the army. The enemy being masters of that navigation, would interrupt this essential intercourse between the States. They have been sensible of these advantages; and by the attempts, which they have made, to bring about a separation of the eastern from the south-

* General Clinton had received full instructions, before he left Philadelphia, dated March 21st. He was ordered to send five thousand men with the greatest secrecy and despatch to the West Indies, for the purpose of attacking St. Lucia. This was delayed for the want of transports, and the necessary ships for a convoy, particularly after the arrival of Count d'Estaing's fleet. This order being unknown to Washington, the preparations for executing it were suspected to indicate a design of evacuating the city.

ern States, and the facility, which their superiority at sea has hitherto given them, have always obliged us, besides garrisoning the forts that immediately defend the passage, to keep a force at least equal to that, which they have had posted in New York and its dependencies.

It is incumbent upon us at this time to have a greater force in this quarter than usual, from the concentred state of the enemy's strength, and the uncertainty of their designs. In addition to this, it is to be observed, that they derive an inestimable advantage from the facility of transporting their troops from one point to another. These rapid movements enable them to give us uneasiness for remote, unguarded parts, in attempting to succour which we should be exposed to ruinous marches, and after all perhaps be the dupes of a feint. If they could, by any demonstration in another part, draw our attention and strength from this important point, and, by anticipating our return, possess themselves of it, the consequences would be fatal. Our dispositions must, therefore, have equal regard to coöperating with you in a defensive plan, and securing the North River; which the remoteness of the two objects from each other renders peculiarly difficult. Immediately upon the change, which happened in your naval affairs, my attention was directed to conciliating these two grand ends. The necessity of transporting magazines, collected relatively to our present position, and making new arrangements for ulterior operations, has hitherto been productive of delay. These points are now nearly accomplished, and I hope in a day or two to begin a general movement of the army eastward. As a commencement of this, one division marched this morning under Major-General Gates towards Danbury, and the rest of the army will follow as speedily as possible.

The following is a general idea of my disposition. The army will be thrown into several divisions, one of which, consisting of a force equal to the enemy's in New York, will be posted about thirty miles in the rear of my present camp, and in the vicinity of the North River, with a view to its defence; the other will be pushed on at different stages as far towards Connecticut River, as can be done consistently with preserving a communication, and having them within supporting distance of each other, so as that, when occasion may require, they may form a junction, either for their own immediate defence, or to oppose any attempts, that may be made on the North River. The facility, which the enemy have of collecting their whole force, and turning it against any point they choose, will restrain us from extending ourselves so far as will either expose us to be beaten by detachment, or endanger the security of the North River.

This disposition will place the American forces as much in a condition for assisting in the defence of your squadron, and the town of Boston, as is compatible with the other great objects of our care. It does not appear to me probable, that the enemy would hazard the penetrating to Boston by land, with the force which they at present have at the eastward. I am rather inclined to believe, that they will draw together their whole land and naval strength, to give the greater probability of success. In order to this, New York must be evacuated; an event, which cannot take place without being announced by circumstances impossible to conceal; and I have reason to hope that the time, which must necessarily be exhausted in embarking and transporting their troops and stores, would be sufficient for me to advance a considerable part of my army in a posture for opposing them.

The sincere esteem and regard, which I feel for your Excellency, make me set the highest value upon every expression of friendship with which you are pleased to honor me. I entreat you to accept the most cordial returns on my part. I shall count it a singular felicity, if, in the course of possible operations above alluded to, personal intercourse should afford me the means of cultivating a closer intimacy with you, and of proving more particularly the respect and attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 12 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Yours of the 10th came to hand late last night. The intentions of the enemy are yet very mysterious. From the expression of your letter, I take it for granted, that General Grey had embarked again after destroying Bedford; and by his hovering about the coast, and Lord Howe's coming round again to Newport, I cannot but think, that they mean something more than a diversion or deception. The destruction of the Count d'Estaing's fleet is an object of the greatest magnitude; but that cannot be easily effected, while they lie in the harbour of Boston, without a coöperation by land and water. I am apprehensive, that they mean to possess themselves of such grounds in the neighbourhood of Boston, as will enable them to carry such a plan into execution. Whether they would do this by landing at a distance, and marching through the country, or possessing themselves at once of part of the harbour, I cannot determine. I must therefore recommend it

to you to keep the strictest watch upon the motions of the enemy, and if you find them inclining towards Boston, endeavour, with your own force and what you can collect upon the occasion, to prevent them from taking such positions as will favor their designs upon the fleet.

Upon a supposition, that the enemy mean to operate to the westward, I have already advanced three brigades some distance from the main body of the army, ready to move forward, should there be occasion; and I intend to place the whole in such a position in a day or two, that they may either march to the eastward, or be within supporting distance of the posts upon the North River, as appearances may require. Be pleased to forward my letter to Count d'Estaing with the greatest expedition, to whom be pleased to communicate every move of the enemy by land or water, as far as they come under your observation. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 12 September, 1778.

SIR,

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit to Congress a copy of a report of a board of officers, who were appointed by me to consider what would be the most eligible plan for invading Canada, in case our future prospects and circumstances should justify the enterprise. The pains, which General Gates has for some time past taken to inform himself on the subject, and the knowledge which General Bayley and Colonel Hazen possess of the country, induced me to make choice of these gentlemen. It appears to me, that the mode recommended by them for an expedition of this

kind is liable to the fewest objections, and, though attended with many difficulties, affords a reasonable prospect of success. The great naval force of the enemy on the lakes is, in my opinion, an almost insurmountable obstacle to any attempt to penetrate by the ordinary communication.

The expediency of the undertaking, in a military point of view, will depend on the enemy's evacuating these States, and on the reinforcements they may send into Canada. While they keep their present footing, we shall find employment enough in defending ourselves, without meditating conquests; or, if they send a large addition of strength into that country, it may require greater force and more abundant supplies, on our part, to effect its reduction, than our resources may admit. But if they should leave us, and their other exigencies should oblige them to neglect Canada, an event which is not impossible, we may derive essential advantages from a successful expedition there; and if it should be thought advisable, there is no time to be lost in making preparations, particularly if the idea of carrying it on in the winter is pursued.

The great importance of the object, both in a military and political light, demands the sanction and concurrence of Congress before any steps can be taken towards it with propriety. The peculiar preparations, which will be necessary from the peculiar nature of the enterprise, are an additional motive with me for requesting thus early their determination, as a considerable expense must be incurred in procuring several articles, which would not be requisite but on this occasion. The soldiery must be clad in a particular manner, to fit them for enduring the inclemencies of an active winter campaign; a number of snow-shoes must be provided, and extraordinary means of trans-

portation, to convey our stores and baggage through a country covered with snow, and a great part of it hitherto unexplored.

Congress will perceive, that valuable magazines both of provisions and forage may be laid up in the upper settlements on Connecticut river. I have given directions for this purpose, because if the expedition in question should be carried into execution, they will be indispensable; if it should not, they will still be very beneficial for supplying the army, especially if the war should be transferred eastward, which there are many powerful reasons to expect. I shall not trouble Congress with more extensive details on the subject, as Colonel Hazen, who will have the honor of delivering this, will be able to satisfy any inquiries they may be pleased to make. I am, with the greatest esteem, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, White Plains, 12 September, 1778.

SIR,

The enclosed copy of a letter from General Sullivan, of the 10th instant, will inform Congress that the enemy have not relinquished their burning plans, and that in this way they have destroyed several houses, stores, and vessels, at and near Bedford.

I was advised on Wednesday night that a body of them, consisting of four or five thousand, under General Grey, had made a landing in that quarter, and were intrenching. In consequence of this, and from an apprehension that General Clinton might possibly mean to operate to the eastward, and form some project in concert with Lord Howe against Count d'Estaing's squadron, I determined to move the troops from this

ground to a rear position, better calculated to afford support to the works on the North River in case an attempt should be made against them, and at the same time more convenient for forwarding detachments to the eastward, if the enemy point their operations that way.

I was the more induced to come to this determination, as most of the accounts from New York seemed to lead to a belief, as they still do, that a considerable movement was and is in contemplation, if not an entire evacuation of the city, and this by water. Besides these reasons, the principal objects for taking post here do not now exist. One was to create every possible jealousy in favor of the expedition against Rhode Island; another, the consuming of the forage within its vicinity and towards Kingsbridge. The former is now over, and the latter in a great degree accomplished.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL DUPORTAIL.

Fort Clinton, West Point, 19 September, 1778.

SIR,

I have perused the memorial, which you delivered relative to the defence of the North River at this place, and, upon a view of it, highly approve what you have offered upon the subject. Colonel Kosciuszko, who was charged by Congress with the direction of the forts and batteries, has already made such a progress in the constructing of them, as would render any alteration in the general plan a work of too much time, and the favorable testimony, which you have given of Colonel Kosciuszko's abilities, prevents uneasiness on this head; but whatever amendments, subordinate to

the general disposition, shall occur as proper to be made, you will be pleased to point out to Colonel Kosciuszko, that they may be carried into execution. The works proposed on the peninsula, not being subject to the abovementioned inconveniences, you will desire Colonel Kosciuszko to show you his plans for approbation, before he proceeds to the construction, or have them traced in the first instance conformably to your own ideas. I am, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

Fredericksburg, 23 September, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter of the 30th ultimo came to my hands a few days ago, and gave me the pleasure of hearing that you were all well, and an opportunity of congratulating you on the birth of a grandchild, though you do not say whether it be a male or female.

The proceedings of the general court-martial, in the case of General Lee, have lain with Congress ever since the 20th of last month for their approbation or disapprobation; and why it is yet undecided upon, I know no more than you; and therefore I shall not hazard a conjecture, as it has been my aim, from the beginning, to avoid saying any thing upon the subject, till it came properly before the public.

To say any thing, at this late hour, of the proceedings against Rhode Island, would be but mere repetitions of narratives, with which all the newspapers are filled. The whole may be summed up in a few words, and amounts to this; that an unfortunate storm (so it appeared, and yet ultimately it may have happened for the best,) and some measures taken in consequence of

it by the French Admiral, perhaps unavoidably, blasted in one moment the fairest hopes that ever were conceived; and, from a moral certainty of success, rendered it a matter of rejoicing to get our own troops safe off the Island. If the garrison of that place, consisting of nearly six thousand men, had been captured, as there was, in appearance at least, a hundred to one in favor of it, it would have given the finishing blow to British pretensions of sovereignty over this country; and would, I am persuaded, have hastened the departure of the troops in New York, as fast as their canvass wings could carry them away. What their present designs are, I know not. They are busily preparing, however, for something. Whether to operate against our posts in the Highlands and this army, whether for a remove eastwardly, and by a junction of their land and naval forces to attempt the destruction of the French fleet at Boston, and the repossession of that town, or whether to leave us altogether, for the purpose of reinforcing Canada, Nova Scotia, and their Islands, are matters yet to be determined. Many circumstances indicate a general movement, whilst others point out a partial one only; so that it is next to impossible to form a decided opinion of their plan. In short, my conception of the matter is, that they have none, but are waiting the orders of the administration, who were weak and wicked enough to expect something from their commissioners; preparing, in the mean while, for their departure, if that should, instead of Lord North's ultimatum, be the determination; or for some vigorous effort, if coercion continue to be their plan.

There are but two capital objects, which they can have in view, except the defeat and dispersion of this army; and those are the possession of the fortifications

in the Highlands, by which means the communication between the eastern and southern States would be cut off, and the destruction of the French fleet at Boston. These objects being far apart, renders it very difficult to secure the one effectually without exposing the other eminently. I have, therefore, in order to do the best that the nature of the case will admit, strengthened the works, and reinforced the garrison in the Highlands, and thrown the army into such positions, as to move eastward or westward, as circumstances may require. The place I now date from is about thirty miles from the fort on the North River; and I have some troops nearer, and others farther off, but all on the road leading to Boston, if we should be dragged that way.

Offer my compliments and congratulation to the young couple on the increase of their family, and my love to my sister and the rest of the family, and be assured that, with every sentiment of affection, I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Fredericksburg, 25 September, 1778.

My dear Marquis,

The sentiments of affection and attachment, which breathe so conspicuously in all your letters to me, are at once pleasing and honorable, and afford me abundant cause to rejoice at the happiness of my acquaintance with you. Your love of liberty, the just sense you entertain of this valuable blessing, and your noble and disinterested exertions in the cause of it, added to the innate goodness of your heart, conspire to render you dear to me; and I think myself happy in being linked with you in bonds of the strictest friendship.

The ardent zeal, which you have displayed during

the whole course of the campaign to the eastward, and your endeavours to cherish harmony among the officers of the allied powers, and to dispel those unfavorable impressions, which had begun to take place in the minds of the unthinking, from misfortunes, which the utmost stretch of human foresight could not avert, deserves, and now receives, my particular and warmest thanks. I am sorry for Monsieur Tousard's loss of an arm in the action on Rhode Island; and offer my thanks to him, through you, for his gallant behaviour on that day.*

Could I have conceived, that my picture had been an object of your wishes, or in the smallest degree worthy of your attention, I should, while Mr. Peale was in the camp at Valley Forge, have got him to take the best portrait of me he could, and presented it to you; but I really had not so good an opinion of my own worth, as to suppose that such a compliment would not have been considered as a greater instance of my vanity, than means of your gratification; and, therefore, when you requested me to sit to Monsieur Lanfang, I thought it was only to obtain the outlines and a few shades of my features, to have some prints struck from.†

If you have entertained thoughts, my dear Marquis, of paying a visit to your court, to your lady, and to your

* M. Tousard was a French officer, attached to the family of the Marquis de Lafayette. In the action on Rhode Island he rushed forward very courageously in advance of the troops, when an attempt was made to take a cannon, and found himself surrounded by the enemy. His horse was killed under him, and he lost his right arm, but escaped from capture. As a reward for this brave act, Congress granted him the rank of lieutenant-colonel by brevet, and a pension of thirty dollars a month for life. — *Journals, October 27th.*

† Mr. Hancock had presented Count d'Estaing with a copy of General Washington's portrait at Boston, and had promised another to Lafayette.

friends this winter, but waver on account of an expedition into Canada, friendship induces me to tell you, that I do not conceive that the prospect of such an operation is so favorable at this time, as to cause you to change your views. Many circumstances and events must conspire to render an enterprise of this kind practicable and advisable. The enemy, in the first place, must either withdraw wholly, or in part, from their present posts, to leave us at liberty to detach largely from this army. In the next place, if considerable reinforcements should be thrown into that country, a winter's expedition would become impracticable, on account of the difficulties, which would attend the march of a large body of men, with the necessary apparatus, provisions, forage, and stores, at that inclement season. In a word, the chances are so much against the undertaking, that they ought not to induce you to lay aside your other purpose, in the prosecution of which you shall have every aid, and carry with you every honorable testimony of my regard and entire approbation of your conduct, that you can wish. But as it is a compliment, which is due, so am I persuaded you would not wish to dispense with the form, of signifying your desires to Congress on the subject of your voyage and absence.

I come now, in a more especial manner, to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favor of the 21st by Major Dubois, and to thank you for the important intelligence therein contained.

I do most cordially congratulate you on the glorious defeat of the British squadron under Admiral Keppel, an event which reflects the highest honor on the good conduct and bravery of Monsieur d'Orvilliers and the officers of the fleet under his command; at the same time that it is to be considered, I hope, as the happy presage of a fortunate and glorious war to his Most

Christian Majesty. A confirmation of the account I shall impatiently wait and devoutly wish for. If the Spaniards, under this favorable beginning, would unite their fleet to that of France, together they would soon humble the pride of haughty Britain, and no longer suffer her to reign sovereign of the seas, and claim the privilege of giving laws to the main.

You have my free consent to make the Count d'Estaing a visit, and may signify my entire approbation of it to General Sullivan, who, I am glad to find, has moved you out of a *cul de sac*.* It was my advice to him long ago, to have no detachments in that situation, let particular places be ever so much unguarded and exposed from the want of troops. Immediately upon my removal from the White Plains to this ground, the enemy threw a body of troops into the Jerseys; but for what purpose, unless to make a grand forage, I have not been able yet to learn. They advanced some troops at the same time from their lines at Kingsbridge towards our old encampment at the Plains, stripping the inhabitants not only of their provisions and forage, but even the clothes on their backs, and without discrimination.

The information, my dear Marquis, which I begged the favor of you to obtain, was not, I am persuaded, to be had through the channel of the officers of the French fleet, but by application to your fair lady, to

* After the evacuation of Rhode Island, General Sullivan retired with a part of the army to his former encampment at Providence. Lafayette was left with the remainder of the troops at Bristol, near the enemy's lines, with orders to watch their motions. This was an exposed situation on a neck of land between the bay and a river. He was afterwards removed farther up the country, behind the town of Warren. General Greene had left the army and gone to Boston, with the view of facilitating, in his capacity of quartermaster-general, the supply of Count d'Estaing's fleet.

whom I should be happy in an opportunity of paying my homage in Virginia, when the war is ended, if she could be prevailed upon to quit, for a few months, the gayeties and splendor of a court, for the rural amusements of an humble cottage.*

I shall not fail to inform Mrs. Washington of your polite attention to her. The gentlemen of my family are sensible of the honor you do them by your kind inquiries, and join with me in a tender of best regards; and none can offer them with more sincerity and affection than I do. With every sentiment you can wish, I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

At Colonel Brinckerhoff's, 3 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

You will perceive, by the enclosed copy of a resolution, which came to hand last night, that Congress have determined on measures for securing Charlestown, in case the enemy should form an expedition against it, and have appointed you to command there. I have nothing to add upon the subject, except my assurance that you will have, as you have had upon all occasions, my warmest wishes for your success and happiness. You will receive your instructions from Congress when you have an opportunity of seeing them. I am, &c.

* Several ladies had lately come out from New York, who reported that a vessel had been captured and brought to that city, in which was contained a present from the Queen of France to Mrs. Washington, as "an elegant testimonial of her approbation of the General's conduct," and that it had been sold at auction for the benefit of the captors. This intelligence was so confidently affirmed, and from such a respectable source, that General Washington had requested the Marquis de Lafayette to make inquiry as to the truth of it, through the medium of the Marchioness at Versailles.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Fishkill, 3 October, 1778.

SIR,

Being separated from my papers, I am uncertain whether I mentioned in my last, that, the enemy in the Jerseys having received a reinforcement and made some forward movements, I had thought it expedient to detach another brigade thither to act in conjunction with the one already there, together with Pulaski's corps and the militia, and had sent Major-General Lord Stirling to take the command of the whole; that I had also ordered Major-General Putnam across the river for the immediate security of West Point, and moved a division of troops to this place, to be nearer that post. I have since come here myself, and propose to remain till the views of the enemy on the Jerseys are decided; though I have had no reason to alter my opinion, that nothing more than a forage is intended. By the last accounts, they had drawn in their out-parties, and resumed their first bounds behind Hackinsac River, at the Liberty-Pole and Newbridge.

That part of Baylor's regiment, which escaped, came off in the first instance, and were afterwards brought off, in so dispersed a manner, that the number has not been ascertained; but, from what I have learned, I should estimate the loss at about fifty men and seventy horses. Major Clough is dead of his wounds. This affair seems to have been attended with every circumstance of cruelty.* It is a small compensation for this

* On the morning of the 27th of September Colonel Baylor marched with his regiment of dragoons from Paramus, and took up his quarters at Herringtown, a short distance from Tappan. Two roads led from the enemy's camp, one on each side of the Hackinsac River, which met at a bridge half a mile below Herringtown. At this bridge Colonel Baylor placed a guard of a sergeant and twelve men, with particular

accident, that Colonel Butler three or four days ago, with a party of infantry and horse comprehending Major Lee's corps, surprised about a hundred Yagers below Tarrytown, killed ten on the spot, and took a lieutenant and eighteen men prisoners. The roughness of the country facilitated the flight of the rest, and prevented the success from being more complete. The proceedings in the case of General St. Clair accompany this letter. I have the honor to be, &c.

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orders to keep a patrol of two men on each of these roads, who were to watch the roads to the distance of a mile from the guard, and be relieved every hour. These orders were strictly obeyed; but the enemy, being early informed of the exact position of the guard and of Baylor's detachment, by disaffected persons in the neighbourhood, marched up during the night, on the west side of the Hackinsac River, till they came within half a mile of the patrol, and then sent a party through the fields at some distance from the road, and cut off the guard and the patrols without being discovered. They pushed forward and made a sudden attack upon Baylor's men, who were taken wholly by surprise. — *Baylor's MS. Letter, October 19th.*

The detachment was quartered for the night in barns, which the enemy forced with fixed bayonets, committing at the first assault indiscriminate slaughter, as far as the darkness would permit. The whole number of privates present was one hundred and four, of whom eleven were killed outright; seventeen were left behind wounded, four of whom afterwards died; and thirty-nine were taken prisoners, eight of whom were wounded. The rest made their escape. Colonel Baylor, Major Clough, a lieutenant, and the surgeon were wounded. A series of affidavits were taken by order of Congress from the men who escaped, in which the particulars of the affair were stated in detail. Several of these men were wounded in numerous places with bayonets. One of the soldiers, from whom an affidavit was taken, had received sixteen wounds; two others twelve each, another nine, and many of them from three to seven. They all testified, that the cry for quarter was not heeded by the assailants. The transaction was universally reprobated as needlessly barbarous and cruel, and by no means consistent with the rules of honorable and civilized warfare. It excited strong feelings of indignation among the people. The policy of the act was if possible still more to be questioned, than its humanity. Its unfavorable consequences must in any event vastly overbalance the gain of immediate success. To kill a few men in the dark was a small compensation for making a host of inveterate enemies, and filling the breasts of thousands with horror and hatred.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Fishkill, 3 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for the transmission of Mr. Beresford's intelligence, though I have not the smallest idea that any thing more than a deception is meant by it, and that Mr. Williams is either a voluntary agent, or the innocent instrument for carrying it on; yet, as the case may be otherwise, common prudence bids us to guard against the worst. A conclusive evidence against the measure, with me, is, his speaking of the troops destined for the southward in the light of a detachment only. I am well convinced myself, that the enemy, long ere this, are perfectly well satisfied, that the possession of our towns, while we have an army in the field, will avail them little. It involves us in difficulty, but does not by any means ensure conquest to them.

They well know, that it is our arms, not defenceless towns, which they have to subdue before they can arrive at the haven of their wishes; and that, till this is accomplished, the superstructure they have been endeavouring to raise, "like the baseless fabric of a vision," falls to nothing. But this, though a reason operating powerfully with me in deciding upon the point, is by no means the most weighty consideration in my mind. A measure of this kind, before the hostile disposition of France became so evident, and before the French fleet arrived on the coast, was probable, as their whole conduct was full of unaccountable things; but to attempt now to detach ten thousand men, which are I suppose half of their army, and to divide their naval strength for the protection of it, would in my judgment be an act of insanity, and expose one part or the other of both land and sea forces to inevitable

ruin. I therefore conclude, that they will go there wholly, or not at all. Nevertheless I may be mistaken.

As you have not acknowledged the receipt of my letter by Major Morris, by whom I took the liberty of returning the first paper parcel of gold you were so obliging as to send me; nor of a subsequent letter by Colonel Hazen, enclosing the letters of Governor Johnstone, Mr. Manning, and others, I am somewhat fearful that they may have been mislaid and forgotten, as these gentlemen were charged with other business of more consequence. With every sentiment of esteem, regard, and affection, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Fishkill, 4 October, 1778.

My dear Marquis,

I have had the pleasure of receiving, by the hands of Monsieur de la Colombe, your favor of the 28th ultimo, accompanied by one of the 24th, which he overtook somewhere on the road. The leave requested in the former,* I am as much interested to grant, as to refuse my approbation of the challenge proposed in the latter. The generous spirit of chivalry, exploded by the rest of the world, finds a refuge, my dear friend, in the sensibility of your nation only. But it is in vain to cherish it, unless you can find antagonists to support it; and however well adapted it might have been to the times in which it existed, in our days it is to be feared, that your opponent, sheltering himself be-

* Permission to return to General Washington's head-quarters, for the purpose of consulting him on certain points of intelligence, which the Marquis had lately received from France.

hind modern opinions, and under his present public character of commissioner, would turn a virtue of such ancient date into ridicule. Besides, supposing his Lordship accepted your terms, experience has proved, that chance is often as much concerned in deciding these matters as bravery; and always more, than the justice of the cause. I would not therefore have your life by the remotest possibility exposed, when it may be reserved for so many greater occasions. His Excellency, the Admiral, I flatter myself, will be in sentiment with me; and, as soon as he can spare you, will send you to head-quarters, where I anticipate the pleasure of seeing you.*

Having written very fully to you a few days ago, and put the letter under cover to General Sullivan, I have nothing to add at this time, but to assure you, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

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* In an address to Congress by the British commissioners, after Governor Johnstone had retired from the commission (Congress having refused to hold any further intercourse with him), they expressed themselves in terms derogatory to France; not very wisely, it must be allowed, considering the relations that then existed between the French and American national councils. The address was signed by all the commissioners, but Lord Carlisle's name appeared at the head, as president of the board. The French officers took offence, and believed the honor of their nation to be concerned. They thought it an affair of sufficient importance to claim their notice on personal grounds, and that Lord Carlisle ought to be called to account for the free remarks, which he had sanctioned by his signature. This duty appertained to Lafayette, he being the highest amongst them in rank. It seemed to accord, also, with his own feelings, and in one of the letters, to which the above was an answer, he had asked General Washington's opinion. Neither the advice of Washington nor of Count d'Estaing could divert him from his purpose. A challenge was sent; but it was declined by Lord Carlisle who said, in a civil and good-humored reply, that he considered himself responsible only to his country and King for his public conduct and language.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Fishkill, 4 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

My public letters to the President of Congress will inform you of the wind that wafted me to this place. Nothing more therefore needs be said on that head. Your letter of the 8th ultimo contains three questions and answers, to wit; Can the enemy prosecute the war? Do they mean to stay on the continent? And, is it our interest to put impediments in the way of their departure? To the first you answer in the negative. To the second you are decided in the opinion, that they do not. And to the third you say clearly, No.

Much, my good Sir, may be said in favor of these answers, and some things against the two first. By way therefore of dissertation on the first, I will also beg leave to put a question, and give it an answer. Can *we* carry on the war much longer? Certainly not, unless some measures can be devised and speedily executed to restore the credit of our currency, restrain extortion, and punish forestallers. Unless these can be effected, what funds can stand the present expenses of the army? And what officers can bear the weight of prices, that every necessary article is now got to? A rat, in the shape of a horse, is not to be bought at this time for less than two hundred pounds; nor a saddle under thirty or forty; boots twenty, and shoes and other articles in like proportion. How is it possible, therefore, for officers to stand this without an increase of pay? And how is it possible to advance their pay, when flour is selling at different places from five to fifteen pounds per hundred weight, hay from ten to thirty pounds per ton, and beef and other essentials in this proportion?

The true point of light, then, to place and consider this matter in is, not simply whether Great Britain can carry on the war, but whose finances, theirs or ours, are most likely to fail; which leads me to doubt very much the infallibility of the answer given to your second question, respecting the enemy's leaving the continent; for I believe they will not do it, while hope and the chapter of accidents can give them a chance of bringing us to terms short of independence. But this, you will perhaps say, they are now bereft of. I acknowledge that many things favor the idea; but I add, that, upon a comparative view of circumstances, there is abundant matter to puzzle and confound the judgment. To your third answer I subscribe with hand and heart. The opening is now fair, and God grant that they may embrace the opportunity of bidding an eternal adieu to our (once quit of them) happy land. If the Spaniards would but join their fleets to those of France, and commence hostilities, my doubts would all subside. Without it, I fear the British navy has it too much in its power to counteract the schemes of France.

The high prices of every necessary; the little, indeed no benefit, which officers have derived from the intended bounty of Congress in the article of clothing; the change in the establishment, by which so many of them are discontinued; the unfortunate delay of this business, which kept them too long in suspense, and set a number of evil spirits to work; the unsettled rank, and contradictory modes of adjusting it, with other causes, which might be enumerated; all these have conspired to sour the temper of the army exceedingly; and have, I am told, been productive of a memorial or representation of some kind to Congress, which neither directly nor indirectly did I know or even hear was in agitation, till some days after it was

despatched; owing, as I apprehend, to the secrecy with which it was conducted to keep it from my knowledge, as I had in a similar instance last spring discountenanced and stifled a project of this sort in its birth. If you have any news worth communicating, do not put it under a bushel, but transmit it to, dear Sir, yours sincerely, &c.

TO EDWARD RUTLEDGE, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Fishkill, 5 October, 1778.

My dear Sir,

Our correspondence seems to be at an end; but why it is so, I am at a loss to discover. In the month of August last year, from the house of Mr. Hill near Germantown, where I was then encamped, I wrote you a long letter; since which I have not received a line from you, but I inquire by every opportunity how you do. Many great and important changes have taken place in our military and political affairs since that period, and I hope, though fortune at times has seemed to frown upon us, for the better. The day seems now to dawn upon us, but clouds and tempests may yet arise to endanger our bark. The designs of the enemy, as yet, are impervious to the view. They are upon the eve, if one may judge from appearances, of some capital move; but of what nature, remains to be disclosed. Many circumstances point to an evacuation of the States; others discourage a belief of it. In a word, it is very difficult to form a decided judgment of their plan. My opinion is, that they have none; but that the ministry, vainly hoping that some good might result from their commission, have not as yet communicated their final orders to Sir Henry; who, in the mean while, is busily preparing for a total evacua-

tion, or an expedition; the same preparations of transports answering to both. If the latter is the plan, and the French squadron at Boston is the object, which I think most important and likely, he has not a moment's time to spare in commencing his operations.

Congress, I presume, are suspicious of the enemy's having an eye to your State, by the measures they are taking for its defence; but I have no idea myself of the enemy's detaching part of their land or sea force on an enterprise of this kind, while a respectable French fleet hovers on this coast. You will have the whole or none of them; though this may be uncertain, for they have done and left undone things so contrary to common conceptions, that they puzzle, at all times and upon all occasions, even conjecture.

The bearer, Major-General Lincoln, is nominated by Congress to take command of the southern department, and I take the liberty of recommending him to your civilities, as a worthy character, a brave and an attentive officer. My respectful compliments await your lady, the Messieurs Middleton, and other gentlemen of my acquaintance. With sincere esteem and regard, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, 6 October, 1778.

SIR,

This will be delivered to you by Major-General the Marquis de Lafayette. The generous motives, which first induced him to cross the Atlantic and enter the army of the United States, are well known to Congress. Reasons equally laudable now engage his return to France, which in its present circumstances claims his

services. His eagerness to offer his duty to his prince and country, however great, could not influence him to quit the continent in any stage of an unfinished campaign. He resolved to remain at least till the close of the present, and embraces this moment of suspense to communicate his wishes to Congress, with a view of having the necessary arrangements made in time, and of being still within reach, should any occasion offer of distinguishing himself in the field.

The Marquis at the same time, from a desire of preserving a relation with us, and a hope of having it yet in his power to be useful as an American officer, solicits only a furlough sufficient for the purposes above mentioned. A reluctance to part with an officer, who unites to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment, would lead me to prefer his being absent on this footing, if it depended on me. I shall always be happy to give such a testimony of his services, as his bravery and conduct on all occasions entitle him to; and I have no doubt, that Congress will add suitable expressions of their sense of his merit, and their regret on account of his departure. I have the honor, &c.*

P. S. The Marquis is so obliging as to take charge of a packet containing the proceedings of a court-martial in General Schuyler's case.

* See Appendix, No. I.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENT FROM CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Fishkill, 6 October, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

I recollect, that in a conference with the committee of arrangement on the subject of enlisting prisoners and deserters, I gave my opinion explicitly against the practice; and that a letter was written by them to Congress, agreeably to this idea, though I am not equally clear, as to the precise contents of the letter, or whether I understood the scope of it to comprehend Pulaski's corps. It may have happened in the perplexity of business, that the peculiar circumstances of the establishment of this corps did not occur to me; otherwise I should have conceived myself bound to make an exception in its favor. A compact made between the public and the Count, when all the inconveniences of engaging such characters had been fully experienced, would have restrained me from recommending a measure, which was a direct breach of it, and might give just cause of complaint. The principal motive for authorizing the Count to raise his corps, was to induce him voluntarily to relinquish the command of the cavalry, with which the officers under him were in general dissatisfied; and it was thought better to submit to the defects in its composition, than either to leave the cavalry in a state, which occasioned a total relaxation of discipline, and destroyed its usefulness, or to force the Count out of it, whose zeal and bravery entitled him to regard, without compensating him in some way that might reconcile him to the sacrifice, which he was required to make. When he proposed his plan to me, I informed him of the objections to it, and even avoided flattering him with the concurrence

of Congress. You will perceive by the enclosed extract of my letter to them, on what footing the affair was placed. The resolve of the 28th of March, which sanctioned his raising a corps, left the point of engaging prisoners and deserters undecided, but empowered me to dispense in that instance with their resolve against it, if I should deem it not injurious to the service. The reasons before assigned determined me to consent to the Count's views, so far as to permit his composing a third of his infantry of deserters.

When the Board of War consulted me on the propriety of permitting this corps to join the army, recurring to the original principle of its formation, my opinion naturally favored its coming forward, if agreeable to Congress. After all the trouble, which the Count has given himself to raise and equip the corps, he could not but esteem it a singular hardship to be deprived of the benefit of his exertions, from considerations of inconvenience, which existed before they were undertaken, and had been in a manner precluded by contract.

The circumstance of the Count's having exceeded his establishment, was a matter to which I did not advert. There would certainly be no injustice in reducing the extra number. But whether, as the men are raised and clad, and the expense already incurred, it may not be as well to risk the additional disadvantage, which may attend bringing them into the field, is a question which Congress will decide. I am extremely sorry, if any misconception in me should have been the cause of the least embarrassment to the committee, and I hope the explanation I have now given will remove every difficulty. With the greatest esteem and regard, I have the honor, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Head-Quarters, 7 October, 1778.

SIR,

Your letter of yesterday reached me in the night. Your observations on the probable intentions of the enemy are forcible.* The capture or destruction of the French fleet appears to be the most important object, which they can have on the continent; and it is very possible they may have it in contemplation, though the time they have lost, since they have had the superiority at sea, and the advanced season of the year, are strong arguments against it. Our present disposition was formed on the possibility of such an event, at the same time that it does not lose sight of the security of the North River, or the concentration of our force to repel any attempt upon the army. Though it may not be probable, that the enemy have at present any design against either of these, it would be imprudent to offer them a temptation by diminishing our strength in a considerable detachment, so far eastward as to be out of supporting distance. If they were able to possess themselves of the Highland passes, and interrupt the navigation of the River, the consequences on the score of subsistence would be terrible, as well to the fleet as to the army. It is supposed, that the enemy have lost all hopes of effecting any thing material against these States, and this

* General Gates had written from Danbury, where he was stationed; — "The French fleet and Boston must be the sole objects of the British arms upon this continent. The season of the year will indeed admit only of a sudden and rash attempt, which success alone will justify. Desperate enterprises do frequently succeed; witness that of 1759 against Quebec. Had Sir Henry Clinton meant to attack this army, he would not have given so much notice and lost so much time. The enemy may leave the continent; if they do not, the French fleet is the prize they mean to contend for." — *MS. Letter, October 6th.*

supposition is upheld by powerful reasons; but, after all, the truth of it depends so much upon the contingencies of naval operations and European politics, that it would not be wise to let it essentially influence our military arrangements.

I am taking measures for having all the roads leading towards Boston put in repair for the more convenient march of the several columns, in case a movement eastward should become necessary. You will therefore be pleased to send a proper fatigue party on the lower route, leading from Danbury to Hartford, so that the column, which may march thence, may not interfere with the others, by falling into the same road, so long as it can be avoided. The column nearest to this will proceed by New Milford, Woodbury, and Waterbury, to Farmington. The repairs are only to be extended through the rough country. You will also send a quartermaster forward to observe the good halting-places at proper stages. His report you will communicate to me. I am, Sir, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 10 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received intelligence, bearing strong marks of authenticity, that the enemy mean a total evacuation

* The enemy in reality had no designs against the French fleet at Boston, though it is probable they kept up an appearance of such a purpose by way of feint. Sir Henry Clinton wrote to Lord George Germain at this time, informing him that the convoy was ready, and five thousand troops would shortly be despatched to the West Indies, and three thousand more to Florida. "With an army so much diminished at New York," he added, "nothing important can be done; especially as it is also weakened by sending seven hundred men to Halifax, and three hundred to Bermuda."— *MS. Letter, October 8th*

of New York. Various are the conjectures of their destination. I cannot think they mean to attempt any thing against Boston, considering the danger of taking a heavy fleet round Cape Cod at this advanced season; but, to be prepared at all events, I had upon the first intelligence of an embarkation ordered two of the brigades stationed at Danbury to move eastward as far as Hartford. I shall now order the third to follow. By the time they arrive there, we shall probably come at a knowledge of the real intentions of the enemy. I have communicated all my intelligence in the fullest manner to the Count d'Estaing, that he may make such preparations as circumstances seem to require.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, near Fredericksburg, 14 October, 1778.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to you an account of the engagement between the French and British fleets on the 27th of July, as published by the British Admiralty Board. I received a printed copy of it last night from New York, which I have forwarded to his Excellency Count d'Estaing. It is evident from Admiral Keppel's own relation of the affair, that he was pretty severely handled, notwithstanding he affects in the conclusion to mention, that he wished extremely for an opportunity to renew the combat the next day.

We are still in great suspense as to the operations and designs of the enemy, though every practicable measure has been used and is pursuing to come at them. By late and direct accounts it would seem, that some troops at least are going from New York. A few

days, I think, must open their conduct decisively. I have had the misfortune to hear, that the Raleigh frigate has become a prize to two British ships of war, after a long and very gallant resistance. Captain Barry, finding that the frigate would fall into the enemy's hands, ran her ashore on Seal Island, to which he escaped in boats with about eighty of his hands, and from thence to the main. It is said he took measures for blowing her up, but was defeated in his purpose by the perfidy of an under-officer, who concealed himself and remained on board.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ANDREW LEWIS, VIRGINIA.

Fredericksburg, 15 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of August came safe to my hands, though delayed in the conveyance. I am very glad that the Board prevailed upon you to act as a commissioner at Fort Pitt, though I am apprehensive the end designed, so far as an Indian treaty was in view, will not be answered by it; and I am sorry that you met with so many disappointments in the beginning, on account of the non-attendance of the gentlemen in behalf of Pennsylvania.

No man can be more thoroughly impressed with

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* The Raleigh, a frigate of thirty-two guns, sailed from Boston on the 25th of September. Soon after leaving the port, Captain Barry discovered two British vessels, one carrying sixty guns, and the other a frigate. He was pursued, and the frigate first overtook him. A sharp action ensued, which continued for several hours, during which the Raleigh had the advantage. The other ship came up and joined in the attack. Captain Barry had the address to escape from the unequal conflict, and ran his vessel on shore.

the necessity of offensive operations against Indians, in every kind of rupture with them, than I am; nor can any man feel more sensibly for General McIntosh, than I do, on two accounts, the public and his own. But ours is a kind of struggle designed, I dare say, by Providence to try the patience, fortitude, and virtue of men. None, therefore, who is engaged in it, will suffer himself, I trust, to sink under difficulties, or be discouraged by hardships. General McIntosh is only experiencing upon a small scale, what I have had an ample share of, upon a large one; and must, as I have been obliged to do in a variety of instances, yield to necessity; that is, to use a vulgar phrase, "shape his coat according to his cloth," or, in other words, if he cannot do as he wishes, he must do what he can.

If the enemy mean to hold their present posts in the United States, the presumption is, that their operations next campaign will be vigorous and decisive; because feeble efforts can be of no avail, unless, by a want of virtue, we ruin and defeat ourselves, which I think is infinitely more to be dreaded, than the whole force of Great Britain, assisted as they are by Hessian, Indian, and Negro allies; for certain I am, that, unless extortion, forestalling, and other practices, which have crept in and become exceedingly prevalent and injurious to the common cause, can meet with proper checks, we must inevitably sink under such a load of accumulated oppression. To make and extort money in every shape that can be devised, and at the same time to decry its value, seems to have become a mere business and an epidemical disease, calling for the interposition of every good man and body of men.

We have for more than a month been kept in an awkward state of suspense, on account of the enemy's

preparations for embarking at New York. Many circumstances indicate a total evacuation of that city and its dependencies; others tend more to prove that it is only a partial one. Some time ago I inclined to the former opinion; at present I lean more to the latter. They are certainly about to detach troops, and I believe to the West Indies; but the weight of evidence, in my judgment, is on the side of their garrisoning New York and Rhode Island, this winter at least. In this case, it would appear clear to you, if you knew the circumstances of the army, that no aid, or very trifling, can go from hence to General McIntosh; but I should think that the frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania could furnish men fully competent to an expedition to Detroit, and of such kind as the service requires. Two very common errors should be avoided in obtaining them, if militia; namely, not to draw the men together till every thing else is prepared; and, next, not to engage them for too short a time. For militia are soon tired of waiting, and will return at the expiration of their term of service, if they are certainly upon the eve of reaping the most important advantages.

If Congress are not convinced of the impropriety of a certain irregular promotion, they are the only set of men who require further and greater proofs, than have already been given, of the error of the measure.* Before I conclude, let me ask if we have any prospect of getting lands, which have been surveyed and located under the proclamation of 1763, but which might not have been patented? This is the case with some that

* Alluding to the appointment of major-generals on the 19th of February, 1777, in which Arnold and Lewis were superseded. See above, Vol. IV. p. 345. General Lewis resigned his commission in consequence of that measure.

I had in my own right and by purchase. Having had no leisure, even in thought, to attend to the matter for near four years, it would be rather hard upon me under these circumstances to be a loser, or be put to difficulty to get my right. Was I not concerned with you in the Burning Spring? Is the land patented and secured?

With sincere regard and esteem, I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL STARK.

Head-Quarters, 19 October, 1778.

SIR,

By recent intelligence from the city of New York, there are the strongest appearances of a general evacuation. Where the force of the enemy will be next directed, can only be the subject of conjecture; but it is generally supposed, if they operate again anywhere in the United States, it will be against Boston and the French fleet. Should this event take place, your influence near the seat of war will enable you to render more essential service there, than where you now are. With a view to this, I am to desire you will proceed forthwith to join General Sullivan at Providence. General Hand will succeed to your present command, to whom, on his arrival at Albany, you will be pleased to communicate every thing necessary for his information and government. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 21 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Since I wrote to you this morning, the inclosed resolve of Congress came to my hands. As Sir Henry

Clinton never complied with the request of granting passports for the transportation of flour by water, it becomes necessary that the convention troops should without loss of time be put in motion for Charlottesville in Virginia, agreeably to the order of Congress. You will be pleased to signify this to General Phillips immediately upon the receipt of this letter. I know of no way of conveying the troops to the place of their destination, but by calling upon the several States through which they are to pass for a proper guard of militia, and carriages sufficient to transport their baggage. You will therefore apply to the State of Massachusetts for the number necessary; and, when you have fixed the time of march and the route, inform Governor Trumbull, that he may be ready to receive them upon the borders of Connecticut. I shall give him previous notice, that he may be prepared for such an event. Be pleased to inform me likewise, when the troops leave their present quarters, that I may make application to the Governors of New York and New Jersey for an escort. I am, &c.*

* The difficulty of procuring flour in the New England States, for the use of the convention troops at Cambridge, had induced Congress to pass a resolve, requesting Sir Henry Clinton to grant passports to American vessels for conveying flour by water from the Middle and Southern States. By another resolve it was left optional with him, either to grant such passports, or supply the flour himself. As he did not accede to either of these propositions, it was necessary to remove the troops to another part of the country, where provisions could be more easily obtained. They were accordingly marched to Charlottesville in Virginia. There are some interesting particulars relating to this march in Madame de Riedesel's *Letters and Memoirs*, which have appeared from the American press in a spirited and well-executed translation by M. DE WALLENSTEIN. Nor is it amiss to observe here, that this little volume contains several descriptions of scenes in the American war, which, for graphical effect, have hardly been equalled by any other writer, particularly in the account of Burgoyne's campaign and the battles of Saratoga.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 22 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have certain advices that the fleet left Sandy Hook the 19th and 20th. The first division consisted of upwards of one hundred and twenty sail, of which fifteen were of the line and ten or twelve frigates. The second division consisted of about thirty sail, two of which were of fifty guns, and two frigates. They stood eastward. Whether the remaining ships and troops are to continue at New York, I have not yet been able to ascertain.

I think it would be prudent, under the present appearances, for you to call for five thousand militia, including those already in service. Although I am myself persuaded, that the late embarkation is not intended against Boston, I would not, for the sake of opinion, put any thing to risk. That force, with the Count's own strength and General Sullivan's, will prevent the enemy, should they be bound thither, from doing any thing decisive before the troops upon their march can get up. It is more than probable, that the British fleet of men of war will appear off Boston, to keep the Count in check, although the destination of the transports may be to some other port. I do not think it will be needful to call for this addition to the militia in their regular course of service, or for any certain time. Those from the vicinity of Boston had better come out for a few days, as in that time the views of the enemy will be known. I am, &c.*

* As soon as General Washington received the above intelligence, he wrote to General Gates, then at Danbury, ordering him to go to Hartford, and take the command of three brigades, which would be immediately despatched to that place, and thence to Boston, in case it should prove that the enemy's fleet had moved in that direction. Parties had also been

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, near Fredericksburg, 22 October, 1778.

SIR,

I have written to General Heath to take immediate measures for carrying into effect the intention of Congress, respecting the removal of the convention troops, in case Sir Henry Clinton has not furnished supplies of provision and fuel, according to their resolution of the 11th ultimo. The matter now rests upon this footing, as passports have not been granted for our vessels, or any answer given to the application upon the subject. It will not be possible for me to send proper guards from the army to escort the troops on their march, and therefore I have requested General Heath to employ a sufficient number of the Massachusetts militia to conduct them to Connecticut. I shall make a like requisition to Governor Trumbull, and it will be necessary that the several States in succession, through which they are to pass, be called upon in the same manner.

With respect to seditious papers, calculated to excite dissensions and mislead the people, Congress may be assured, that whenever they may be sent from the enemy by a flag, and they come to my hands, I shall not fail to suppress them. I fear, however, the avenues and channels in which they may be conveyed are so various and so numerous, that no exertions will be found sufficient entirely to prevent the evil.*

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sent forward to repair the roads through Connecticut, that the main body of the army might march with celerity by different routes, the moment it should be ascertained that an attack on Count d'Estaing's squadron and Boston was actually intended by the enemy. General Washington was himself in readiness to proceed to that post. As a precautionary measure, though he did not believe the fleet would sail eastward, three additional brigades under General McDougall were ordered on the 24th to march to Hartford and join General Gates.

* When the first news of Lord North's conciliatory bills reached Con-

Having mentioned the subject of seditious papers, I beg leave to observe, that the commissioners in their late proclamation and manifesto have touched upon every thing to awaken the fears of the people. They have thrown out an implied threat to change the manner of the war to one of a more predatory and destructive kind. They may have done this only *in terrorem;* but it is possible that it may be intended as a serious principle of practice. It perhaps may not be improvident to guard against it, by fortifying our most valuable and most accessible seaports. Immediately after the action at Monmouth, I sent General Duportail to form a plan of fortification for the Delaware. While he was in the execution of this task, he was called away at General Lee's instance as a witness in his trial. After this was over, I thought it was necessary that he should turn his attention to the Highland posts; and lately the possibility of an enterprise against the French fleet and the

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gress, they resolved, that any man or body of men who should presume to make a separate or partial convention with the commissioners, ought to be considered and treated as enemies of the United States. Intelligence had recently been received, that the commissioners "were about to send out, under the sanction of a flag, certain seditious papers, under the name and title of manifestos, to be distributed throughout the United States, with a view to stir up dissensions, animosities, and rebellion among the people." Persons engaged in distributing papers of this sort, were declared not to be entitled to the protection of a flag; and it was recommended to the executive powers of the several States to take up and secure such persons in close custody, and that the papers should be printed in the public gazettes. — *Journals, October 16th.* The offensive manifesto is contained in the *Remembrancer*, Vol. VII. p. 127. Copies were folded in separate parcels, and sent to the President of Congress, to a member in Congress from each of the States, to the governors of the States, military commanders, speakers of assemblies, ministers of the gospel, and judges. It is not likely, that many of the parcels reached their destination. General Sullivan received from the commanding officer at Newport a box of these papers, which he delivered over to the Assembly of Rhode Island. The flag ship, containing the copies for Congress and Pennsylvania, was cast away, and duplicates were forwarded with a letter from Dr. Ferguson.

town of Boston determined me to send him to that place, to take measures for their common security. Previous to this, however, he had sent Colonel Laumoy to prepare the way, by taking plans of the river and the adjacent country near Philadelphia. These points I deemed it material to mention; and I submit to Congress the propriety, as Colonel Laumoy is not yet returned, of their directing a number of men to prosecute the defences.

I have the honor to transmit a copy of Lieutenant-Colonel Butler's journal, which I just now received from General Stark. Congress will perceive by this, that he has effectually destroyed the settlements of Anaquaga and Unadilla, and returned with the troops under his command to Schoharie. I hope their destruction will give some relief to the frontier inhabitants of this and the States of Jersey and Pennsylvania, at least for this year, as they were places of rendezvous for the savages and Tories, who infested them, and where they deposited a part of their plunder.

I have the honor, &c.*

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, 24 October, 1778.

SIR,

The coincidence between your Excellency's sentiments respecting the Marquis de Lafayette's challenge

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* Colonel Butler's Journal was printed by order of Congress. See *Remembrancer*, Vol. VII. p. 253. An enterprise into the Indian country, near the sources of the Susquehanna, had been meditated on an extended scale. The successes of Colonel Butler in destroying some of the principal Indian towns, and the lateness of the season, caused the project to be deferred. The particulars may be seen in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. III. p. 562.

communicated in the letter with which you honored me on the 20th, and those which I expressed to him on the same subject, is peculiarly flattering to me. I am happy to find, that my disapprobation of this measure was founded on the same arguments, which, in your Excellency's hands, acquire new force and persuasion. I omitted neither serious reasoning nor pleasantry to divert him from a scheme, in which he could be so easily foiled, without having any credit given to him by his antagonist for his generosity and sensibility. He intimated, that your Excellency did not discountenance it, and that he had pledged himself to the principal officers of the French squadron to carry it into execution. The charms of vindicating the honor of his country were irresistible; but, besides, he had in a manner committed himself, and could not decently retract. I however continued to lay my friendly commands upon him to renounce his project; but I was well assured, that, if he determined to persevere in it, neither authority nor vigilance would be of any avail to prevent his message to Lord Carlisle. And though his ardor overreached my advice and influence, I console myself with the reflection, that his Lordship will not accept the challenge; and that while our friend gains all the applause, which is due to him for wishing to become the champion of his country, he will be secure from the possibility of such dangers as my fears would otherwise create for him, by those powerful barriers, which shelter his Lordship, and which I am persuaded he will not in the present instance violate.

The report of Lord Carlisle's having proposed a substitute reached me, for the first time, in your Excellency's letter.* If this is really the case, his Lordship has

* This was a false rumor, as Lord Carlisle made no such proposition in his reply to the Marquis de Lafayette.

availed himself of one of the ways in which he was at liberty to wave the Marquis's defiance, and has probably answered it in a strain of pleasantry; for, the affair being wholly personal, his Lordship could not have made such a proposition seriously. Indeed I have every reason to think, that the matter has terminated as I expected; for the Marquis was still in Philadelphia, by my last accounts from thence. We wait with impatience for his arrival, which he promised sooner than his affairs have permitted. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 25 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received intelligence from two different quarters, that the fleet, which sailed from the Hook, contained only the invalids of the army bound for Europe, the officers of the reduced regiments, and the families of several public and private gentlemen. Perhaps all outward bound vessels might have taken the benefit of convoy, which may have enlarged the fleet to an uncommon size. My accounts still confirm the fact of a very considerable body of troops being embarked, but that they yet remain in the bay of New York. Hence arose the mistake. My intelligence was not before sufficiently accurate, and I was naturally led to believe, that the fleet which left the Hook had the troops on board. You shall be advised of the sailing of this second fleet. I am, &c.*

* The first fleet, at least in part, had troops on board, who, as well as those in the second fleet, were destined for the West Indies and Florida. On the same day that the above letter was written, Sir Henry Clinton wrote to the minister as follows. "In addition to the detachment for

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL AARON BURR.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 26 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have your favor of the 24th. You, in my opinion, carry your ideas of delicacy too far, when you propose to drop your pay, while the recovery of your health necessarily requires your absence from the service. It is not customary, and it would be unjust. You therefore have leave to retire until your health is so far re-established, as to enable you to do your duty. Be pleased to give the Colonel notice of this, that he may know where to call upon you, should any unforeseen exigency require it. I am, &c.*

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL SCOTT.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 27 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am favored with yours of yesterday. We have been much deceived, as to the fleet which sailed from

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St. Augustine, there are now embarked one thousand men, being in all three thousand, under the command of Colonel Campbell, with orders to endeavour to take possession of Savannah, and afterwards to pursue such measures as may be found most effectual for the recovery of the province. If Mr. Washington, alarmed at this embarkation, sends a force to the southward, we are by no means sure of success; and, although we may succeed in taking possession of Georgia, I am apprehensive we shall not be able to keep it; as the moment he knows the destination of the expedition, he will be convinced I am left entirely upon the defensive, and therefore will be able to make what detachments during the winter he pleases."— *MS. Letter, October 25th.*

It was in anticipation of such a movement on the part of the enemy, though without any knowledge as to the fact, that Congress had ordered General Lincoln to take the command of the southern department.

* Lieutenant-Colonel Burr was in Colonel Malcolm's regiment, and at this time stationed at West Point.

the Hook on the 20th instant. I have certain intelligence, that there were no other troops on board, than the invalids bound for Europe. The transports, which actually contain the troops that have been embarked, remained in the bay of New York on the 23d. It is possible, that the British guards, who have been some time under orders to return to England, may have been on board the fleet that sailed. I shall be glad if your spies would inquire into that matter.

I am sorry that any officer should be so far lost to all sense of honor and duty, as to talk of resigning because he has not marched with the corps to which he belongs. I would have you inform any of those, who talk at this rate, that if they leave their post or command before they are regularly drawn off or relieved, or shall directly or indirectly cause any soldier to do the like, they shall be punished, as far as martial law will extend, without favor or mitigation. It is true, that officers, who conceive they are to go when and where they please, are better out of the service than in it, but they will not be indulged under the present circumstances. The troops, who have marched eastward, are no more going into winter-quarters than those at Bedford or Fredericksburg, and may as likely march back as forward. This is not said to quiet the clamors of those officers with you, but to show that it is their duty to attend to the command assigned them, and not to look to the duty others are performing, without knowing the principle or design of it. I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* General Scott was stationed at Bedford to watch the motions of the enemy near the lines, and to procure intelligence from spies and deserters. The eastern troops, who were under him, had complained, that they were left behind when the regiments to which they belonged were marching homeward. Some of the officers threatened to resign if they were not allowed to follow their regiments, and General Scott believed that their influence had caused desertions among the troops.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

27 October, 1778.

SIR,

I have read your Excellency's two favors of the 18th and 21st instant, with all the pleasure, which the perusal of your letters never fails to inspire, and which naturally attends the communications of those in whom we are interested. I rejoice with you in the prospect of your being so soon in a state to resume the sea. I cannot but ardently desire, that an opportunity may be soon offered you of again exerting that spirit of well-directed activity and enterprise, of which you have already given proofs so formidable to our enemies, and so beneficial to the common cause.

It is to be hoped our next accounts from Europe will manifest, that the court of Spain has properly estimated the value of the present moment, and has united her power to that of France, to give a decisive blow to the haughty dominion, which Britain has so long affected to maintain over the sea. The satisfaction I feel, in looking forward to this event, is augmented by the illustrious part I am persuaded you will act in accomplishing it. My letter of the 24th will, I hope, have removed your Excellency's apprehensions for our amiable young friend. Every day's continuance where he now is, affords an additional confirmation of my conjecture as to the manner in which his proposal has been received. It was natural that your sensibility should be affected as it was. A generous solicitude for the safety of a friend, so far from requiring an apology, is entitled to applause.

The British commissioners, I believe, will not trouble us with any more of their harangues. They authorize us to consider the last as a farewell speech, preparatory

to their final exit. They will not need our aid to accelerate their political death. Whether they may not undergo a transmigration, of the sort your Excellency mentions, time will discover. More unlikely things than this sometimes happen. The enemy's affairs in New York remain without any perceptible alterations from the state, in which they were when I had the honor of writing to you last. Their troops, who have embarked, still lie in the harbour.

October 31*st.* — I shall not be surprised if, in a little time, Admiral Byron should make a demonstration before the harbour of Boston, deriving confidence from the superiority of his force. His apprehensions of your Excellency's activity may suggest this measure, to cover the movements which the enemy are making off the coast.

Your Excellency's sentiments give value to my own, on the utility of some well combined system of fortification for the security of our principal seaport towns. The predatory war, which the enemy threaten, and have in several instances actually carried on, and which they no doubt have the disposition to repeat when they shall have the opportunity, give additional force to the other reasons for a measure of that nature.

I impatiently expect the arrival of Mr. Holker, to confer with him on the important objects with which he will be charged. I shall cautiously observe the secrecy you desire. Colonel Hamilton's high respect for your Excellency cannot permit him to be insensible to so flattering a mark of your confidence and friendship, as the exception in his favor affords.*

* Mr. Holker was agent for the French marine in America, and consul from France to the United States. Count d'Estaing wrote, that Mr. Holker would make an interesting communication in his name. "I en-

I received a letter yesterday from the Marquis. He gives me to hope the pleasure of seeing him to-morrow. He also intimates, that Lord Carlisle has not only declined his proposition for the present, but, by a prudent foresight, has provided against the necessity of reviving the question at any future period. With the warmest esteem and most respectful attachment, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PHILLIPS.

Head-Quarters, 6 November, 1778.

SIR,

Your cares for the troops of the convention on their present march are such, as discover the attentive commander, while your expressions of politeness claim my personal respect. I shall endeavour, during the continuance of their march, to confine its inconveniences to such as are unavoidable, or as cannot be obviated by any arrangement of ours at this season of the year. For this purpose, I have appointed an officer of rank to attend the march, and commissaries and quarter-masters to meet the troops, with such other dispositions as appear necessary on the occasion.*

I have no doubt but your officers will accommodate their minds to the change, and so attend to the dis-

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treat you," said he, "not to confide the secret to any person, except Colonel Hamilton. His talents and his personal qualities have secured to him for ever my esteem, my confidence, and my friendship." Count d'Estaing had likewise made known the affair, whatever it was, to the Marquis de Lafayette.

* Colonel Theodoric Bland, of the first regiment of light dragoons, was the officer appointed to superintend the march of the convention troops. General Burgoyne sailed for England in May, and from that time the command of these troops devolved upon Major-General Phillips.

cipline of their soldiers as to prevent disputes, either with their conductors or the countries through which they may travel. The resolution of Congress, directing the removal of the convention troops to Charlottesville, includes, in my opinion, its officers of every description; and in this sentiment I have written to Major-General Gates, who now commands at Boston. The desire you express for a sight of your friends, the settlement of private affairs, and a moment of free communication with those at a distance, is natural; but, Sir, the proposition, which you have been pleased to prefer to me on this subject, must come directly and in the first instance before Congress.

I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Fredericksburg, 14 November, 1778.

SIR,

This will be accompanied by an official letter on the subject of the proposed expedition against Canada. You will perceive I have only considered it in a military light; indeed I was not authorized to consider it in any other; and I am not without apprehensions, that I may be thought, in what I have done, to have exceeded the limits intended by Congress. But my solicitude for the public welfare, which I think deeply interested in this affair, will, I hope, justify me in the eyes of all those, who view things through that just medium.* I do not know, Sir, what may be your

* A committee of Congress, in conjunction with the Marquis de Lafayette, had drawn up a plan for an attack on Canada, which was to be effected by the combined operations of the United States and France. Early in the succeeding summer, three divisions of American troops,

sentiments in the present case; but, whatever they are, I am sure I can confide in your honor and friendship, and shall not hesitate to unbosom myself to you on a point of the most delicate and important nature.

The question of the Canadian expedition, in the form in which it now stands, appears to me one of the most interesting that has hitherto agitated our national deliberations. I have one objection to it, untouched in my public letter, which is, in my estimation, insurmountable, and alarms all my feelings for the true and permanent interests of my country. This is the introduction of a large body of French troops into Can-

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amounting in the whole to twelve thousand six hundred men, were to make the attack at three different points, namely, Detroit, Niagara, and by way of the Connecticut River. At the same time, a French fleet was to enter the St. Lawrence with a body of troops, and proceed against Quebec. The plan was adopted by Congress, and ordered to be sent to Dr. Franklin, and presented by him to the French cabinet. — See the *Secret Journal*, Vol. II. p. 111. A copy of the plan was forwarded to General Washington, with a request that he would communicate his observations upon it. He examined the subject in detail, and in a very long despatch attempted to prove the impracticability of the scheme, and to dissuade Congress from entering into engagements, which it was quite impossible for them to fulfil. It required resources in troops and money, which Congress could not command, and was in itself so extensive and complicated, as to promise but a slender hope of success, even with the best means of pursuing it. The despatch was referred to a committee, who reported a general acquiescence in the General's views, but still thought the project should not be abandoned. Much confidence was entertained, that the British would evacuate the seaports, and leave the American army at liberty to operate in the interior; and it was recommended that preparations should be made in anticipation of such an event, though not on so large a scale as contemplated in the above-mentioned plan. The committee likewise expressed an opinion, that the General should be directed to write to the Marquis de Lafayette on the subject, and also very fully to Dr. Franklin, "in order that eventual measures might be taken, in case an armament should be sent from France to Quebec, to coöperate to the utmost degree, which the finances of the States would admit." The report was adopted by Congress. — *Secret Journal*, Vol. II. p. 125. See also Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. III. pp. 568 — 580.

ada, and putting them in possession of the capital of that province, attached to them by all the ties of blood, habits, manners, religion, and former connexion of government. I fear this would be too great a temptation to be resisted by any power actuated by the common maxims of national policy. Let us realize for a moment the striking advantages France would derive from the possession of Canada; the acquisition of an extensive territory, abounding in supplies for the use of her islands; the opening a vast source of the most beneficial commerce with the Indian nations, which she might then monopolize; the having ports of her own on this continent independent of the precarious good will of an ally; the engrossing of the whole trade of Newfoundland whenever she pleased, the finest nursery of seamen in the world; the security afforded to her islands; and, finally, the facility of awing and controlling these States, the natural and most formidable rival of every maritime power in Europe. Canada would be a solid acquisition to France on all these accounts, and because of the numerous inhabitants, subjects to her by inclination, who would aid in preserving it under her power against the attempt of every other.

France, acknowledged for some time past the most powerful monarchy in Europe by land, able now to dispute the empire of the sea with Great Britain, and if joined with Spain, I may say, certainly superior, possessed of New Orleans on our right, Canada on our left, and seconded by the numerous tribes of Indians in our rear from one extremity to the other, a people so generally friendly to her, and whom she knows so well how to conciliate, would, it is much to be apprehended, have it in her power to give law to these States.

Let us suppose, that, when the five thousand French troops (and under the idea of that number twice as many might be introduced) had entered the city of Quebec, they should declare an intention to hold Canada, as a pledge and surety for the debts due to France from the United States, or, under other specious pretences, hold the place till they can find a bone for contention, and, in the mean while, should excite the Canadians to engage in supporting their pretences and claims; what should we be able to say, with only four or five thousand men to carry on the dispute? It may be supposed, that France would not choose to renounce our friendship by a step of this kind, as the consequence would be a reunion with England on some terms or other, and the loss of what she had acquired in so violent and unjustifiable a manner, with all the advantages of an alliance with us. This, in my opinion, is too slender a security against the measure, to be relied on. The truth of the position will entirely depend on naval events. If France and Spain should unite, and obtain a decided superiority by sea, a reunion with England would avail very little, and might be set at defiance. France, with a numerous army at command, might throw in what number of land forces she thought proper, to support her pretensions; and England, without men, without money, and inferior on her favorite element, could give no effectual aid to oppose them. Resentment, reproaches, and submission seem to be all that would be left to us. Men are very apt to run into extremes. Hatred to England may carry some into an excess of confidence in France, especially when motives of gratitude are thrown into the scale. Men of this description would be unwilling to suppose France capable of acting so ungenerous a part. I am heartily disposed to

entertain the most favorable sentiments of our new ally, and to cherish them in others to a reasonable degree. But it is a maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interest; and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it. In our circumstances we ought to be particularly cautious; for we have not yet attained sufficient vigor and maturity to recover from the shock of any false step, into which we may unwarily fall.

If France should even engage in the scheme, in the first instance, with the purest intentions, there is the greatest danger that, in the progress of the business, invited to it by circumstances, and perhaps urged on by the solicitations and wishes of the Canadians, she would alter her views.

As the Marquis clothed his proposition, when he spoke of it to me, it would seem to have originated wholly with himself; but, it is far from impossible, that it had its birth in the cabinet of France, and was put into this artful dress to give it the readier currency. I fancy that I read in the countenance of some people, on this occasion, more than the disinterested zeal of allies. I hope I am mistaken, and that my fears of mischief make me refine too much, and awaken jealousies that have no sufficient foundation. But upon the whole, Sir, to wave every other consideration, I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish, as much as possible, to avoid giving a foreign power new claims of merit for services performed to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable. I am, with the truest attachment and most perfect confidence, dear Sir, &c.*

* President Laurens wrote in reply;—"I believe, and upon good grounds, the scheme for an expedition into Canada in concert with the

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL HAND.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 16 November, 1778.

SIR,

I have yours of the 13th, containing the disagreeable account of the attack upon Colonel Alden's regiment at Cherry Valley. I have ordered General Clinton, with the two remaining regiments of his brigade, to march

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arms of France, originated in the breast of the Marquis de Lafayette, encouraged probably by conferences with Count d'Estaing, and I also believe it to be the offspring of the purest motives, so far as respects that origin; but this is not sufficient to engage my concurrence in a measure big with eventual mischiefs. As deeply as my very limited time and faculties had suffered me to penetrate, I had often contemplated our delicate connexion with France; and, although it is painful to talk of one's own foresight, I had viewed and foretold fifteen months ago the humiliating state, to which our embryo independence would be reduced by courting from that nation the loan of more money, than should be actually necessary for the support of the army and of our unfortunate navy.

"I was one of the six unsuccessful opponents to the resolution for borrowing money from France for paying the interest of our loan-office certificates. We have in this single article plunged the Union into a vast amount of debt; and from neglecting to exert our very small abilities, or even to show a leading disposition to cancel any part of the former demand against us, our bills for that interest are now floating in imminent danger of dishonor and disgrace. Fully persuaded of the true value of national honor, I anxiously wished to support our own by a propriety and consistency of conduct; and I dreaded the consequences of subjecting our happiness to the disposal of a powerful creditor, who might on very specious grounds interpret national honor to our destruction. I warned my friends against the danger of mortgaging these States to foreign powers. Every million of livres you borrow implies a pledge of your lands; and it is optional in your creditor to be repaid at the bank of England with an exorbitant premium, or to collect the money due to him in any of your ports, and according to his own mode, whenever national interest shall require the support of pretended national honor.

"Hence your Excellency will perceive what were my feelings, when the propositions for subduing Canada, by the aid of a French fleet and army, were broached to me. I demurred exceedingly to the Marquis's scheme, and expressed some doubts of the concurrence of Congress. This was going as far as I dared consistently with my office, or considering him as a gentleman of equal honor and tenacity. I trusted the issue of his application to the sagacity of Congress. The business was re-

immediately to Albany, that they may be ready to act as circumstances may require. It is in the highest degree distressing to have our frontier so continually harassed by this collection of banditti, under Brant and Butler. I would have you, without loss of time, consult General Schuyler, and some other gentlemen in the part of the country where you now are, upon the propriety or practicability of some offensive operations at this season of the year against these people, with the number of men which the addition of the two regiments will make; by means of which, they may be removed to such a distance, as to make it inconvenient for them to effect such frequent incursions. If any thing is to be undertaken, let me know in what quarter it is to be, as soon as it is determined.

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ferred to a committee, who conferred with the Marquis. Their report was framed agreeably to his wishes, but the House very prudently determined to consult the Commander-in-chief previously to a final determination; and, although your Excellency's observations are committed, I am much mistaken if every member in Congress is not decided in his opinion in favor of them. If the prosecution of so extensive a project is, from the present state of our army and funds, impracticable on our part, it becomes altogether unnecessary to discuss the point in a political view; and I trust the Marquis will be satisfied with such reasonings, in apology for our desisting from the pursuit of his favorite enterprise, as our circumstances will dictate.

"The immense debts, which we are involved in abroad and at home, demand the most serious attention, and call for an exertion of the collected wisdom of all these States, in order to secure what we have saved from the ravages of the enemy. I am very short-sighted, if there be at this time any encouragement for attempting distant conquests. I have been uniformly averse to every proposition, which tended to dissipate our strength, and to accumulate our debt. Events have confirmed my opinions, and at this instant, taking in view all circumstances, I have doubts of the policy, and more of the success, of the pending expedition against East Florida." — *MS. Letter, November 20th.*

It is a curious political fact, that, notwithstanding the suspicions, which prevailed on the subject in the United States, the French government was opposed to an expedition against Canada, or any attempt to take that province from the English. It was the settled policy of the French king

If it shall not be judged expedient to carry on an expedition at this time, you will then consult with the gentlemen above mentioned, upon the most proper disposition of the troops to support each other in case of an attack upon any of the separate posts, and at the same time to afford protection and cover to the frontiers. Count Pulaski's legion, consisting of about two hundred and fifty horse and foot, is at Cole's Fort, in the Minisink settlement. I intend to strengthen it with the addition of some other corps, say about two hundred and fifty more. Colonel Cortlandt's regiment is between Minisink and Rochester.

In deliberating upon the matter before mentioned, you will keep these troops in view, as they may either

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from the beginning of the contest, that Canada and Nova Scotia should remain in the power of Great Britain. This may appear the more singular, as it was generally supposed, that one of the main objects of France in joining the United States was to recover Canada, and regain a portion of that territory and influence on the continent of America, which she had lost in the preceding war. The French minister in America was instructed not to oppose any scheme, that Congress might form against Canada, but at the same time not to afford any encouragement of aid from France in such an enterprise. This fact was not known, of course, to the Marquis de Lafayette; nor to Count d'Estaing, when he issued his *Declaration* to the Canadians, dated at Boston on the 28th of October. — See Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. I. p. 189.

During the course of his deliberations, Washington consulted Mr. Jay, who was then at Fishkill, not far from head-quarters; and he was unquestionably much benefited by the counsels of that zealous patriot and sagacious statesman. The author of the *Life of John Jay* (Vol. I. p. 83,) says; "They both concurred in disapproving the plan; the General afterwards addressed a letter to Congress on the subject, in which he urged a variety of objections to the plan, but, for obvious reasons, omitted the one, which had most weight in his mind, the probability that the French would insist on retaining Canada if conquered by their aid, and the danger of permitting them thus to gain a footing on the frontier of the United States." The above letter will show, that he took effectual means to make his sentiments known to Congress. By an oversight, also, the author fixes the date of the transaction in the autumn of 1777, which is a year too early. A similar error occurs, respecting the same subject, in the *Life of Hamilton*, Vol. I. p. 154.

coöperate with those to the northward, or make any diversion to favor them, should an offensive operation be determined upon. I am, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Fredericksburg, 20 November, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

Congress seem to have a strong desire to undertake an expedition against Canada. The practicability of it depends upon the employment, which the enemy intend to give us on the seaboard next campaign, on their strength in Canada, the state of our resources, and other circumstances, some of which are too much buried in obscurity, others too much in the field of conjecture, to permit us to form any decisive opinion about them at this time. But there is not a moment to spare in preparing for such an event, if hereafter it should be found expedient to undertake it.

In your letter of the 9th ultimo, which you did me the favor of writing upon this subject, you are opposed to an enterprise against Canada by the way of Coos, and assign cogent reasons for not making it a principal dependence. You are also against the route by Oswego; but, as an expedition that way had not been suggested, you do not touch upon the reasons, but recom-

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* Colonel Ichabod Alden commanded a regiment of continental troops from Massachusetts. He had been recently stationed at Cherry Valley. The attack on that place, and the massacre of its inhabitants by a party of Tories and Indians, commanded by Walter Butler and the noted Joseph Brant, constitute one of the most tragical events in the history of border warfare. Colonel Alden was killed, and many of the inhabitants, men, women, and children, were butchered in cold blood. The particulars have been well narrated in Campbell's *Annals of Tryon County*, pp. 96 - 120.

mend the common route by the way of Lake Champlain, and a winter expedition, if the ice will admit of it.

In general, winter campaigns are destructive to troops, and nothing but pressing necessity, and the best state of preparation, can justify them. I fear neither the state of our provisions, the condition of our men, nor the situation of our officers (the distresses of whom, on account of the uncommonly high prices of every necessary of life, are a source of general discontent and indifference to the service), would warrant the undertaking, even if the state of the Lakes, and the force of Canada, should invite to the measure. I am clear, also, that neither force nor stratagem can give us a well-founded hope of a decisive superiority in naval strength upon Lake Champlain, where the enemy are at present so powerful.

Your scheme for preparing materials for building two large ships upon this lake is plausible, and, if only one or two were entrusted with the secret, practicable. But when fifty men are to be consulted, before the measure can be adopted, many of whom are inattentive to the importance of keeping military manœuvres secret, and a knowledge of the plans by that means may get to the enemy's emissaries, who are industrious in acquiring and diligent in communicating every piece of useful information; I say, when this is the case, I can entertain but little hope of success from a project of this kind. If, from these considerations, a winter's expedition is found impracticable or unadvisable; if the conquest of the enemy's fleet on Lake Champlain is not to be accomplished by force nor by stratagem; and if an enterprise by the way of Coos is inadmissible, as a primary object;—

1. What door is left open for an expedition against Canada?

2. How far is there a moral certainty of extending the American arms into that country in the course of next campaign? And,

3. How far short of the entire conquest, and annexation of Canada to the Union, would give permanent peace and security to the frontiers of these States?

In considering these points, and such others as may hereafter occur, it will be necessary to take the matter up in two points of view; presuming, in the one case, that the enemy will evacuate the United States; in the other, that they mean to retain New York and Rhode Island as garrison towns. In discussing them with that freedom and candor, which I mean to do, you will readily perceive that it is my wish to enter into an unlimited and confidential correspondence with you on this subject. In addition, then, to the above queries;

4. Where lie the difficulties of an expedition against Canada by the way of Lake Ontario?

5. Why did General Amherst take this route, when Lake Champlain was open, free, and so much more direct, if he did not foresee that some apparent advantages were to be derived from it?

6. What resources can be drawn from the State of New York towards the support of an expedition of this kind?

7. At what places would it be necessary to establish posts between Albany and Oswego, for the support of the communication, and security of convoys? And,

8. How many men will be required at each post for the above purposes, and at Oswego?

I mean to hazard my thoughts upon a plan of operations for next campaign, if the enemy should evacuate these States and leave us at liberty: but being unacquainted with the country, and many other matters es-

sentially necessary to form a right judgment upon so extensive a project, I am sensible that it will be very defective, and shall consider it as the part of friendship in you, to observe upon every part of my plan with the utmost freedom.

I have already laid it down as a position, that, unless a winter expedition can be undertaken with success (opposed to which, in addition to the reasons already assigned, the want of provisions I find is an almost insuperable bar), or the fleet at St John's can by some means or other be destroyed, the door into Canada by way of Lake Champlain is effectually closed. I am further of opinion, that the distance of land carriage by the way of Coos for flour and stores is too great to expect, that a sufficient body of troops can be introduced through that route, to answer *singly* any valuable purpose; and I am therefore naturally led to turn my thoughts to the route by the way of Oswego, though difficulties of the same kind, but not in so great a degree, present themselves here, as on the other Lake.

If I am not mistaken with respect to the water carriage from Schenectady to Oswego, by the help of finesse and false appearances a pretty large stride may be taken towards obtaining a naval superiority on Lake Ontario, before the real design would be unfolded.

The plan I would adopt should be this. By innuendoes and oblique hints, I would endeavour to acquire the mastery of Lake Champlain; and, to give currency to this belief, I would have the saw-mills about Fort Anne and Fort Edward set to work to prepare plank for batteaux, and such kind of armed vessels as may be proper for Lake Ontario. I would go further, and, though it should be inconvenient and expensive, I would build the batteaux, and bring the timber for larger vessels to some place, or places, that might serve to confirm an

idea of this kind. A plan of this sort, if well conceived and digested, and executed with secrecy, might, I think, deceive, so far as to draw the attention of the enemy to Lake Champlain, at the expense of Ontario, especially as part of my plan is to advance a respectable body of troops at a proper season to Coos for purposes, which will be mentioned hereafter.

In the spring, when every thing is ripe for execution, and the real design can no longer be concealed, I would advance with the utmost celerity consistent with proper caution to Oswego in the batteaux, which have been provided apparently for Lake Champlain, transporting the armed vessels in pieces to the same place. But here I am to ask, if this is practicable. My knowledge of the water communication from Schenectady to Oswego is not sufficiently accurate to enable me to form a decided opinion upon the possibility of this measure; and, if it is not to be effected, my plan in part fails, and we can only provide the materials under false colors, and depend upon out-building the enemy to obtain the superiority of the Lake. Whether the superiority can be obtained in this manner, I am not well able to determine, though it is very necessary to be known, as it is the corner-stone of the superstructure. Much will depend upon the practicability of the enemy's getting vessels, or materials for vessels, from Lake Champlain or Montreal, to the navigation above La Galette; because I proceed upon the principle, that, if we can deceive them effectually, their whole attention will be drawn to the more interior parts of the country, and of course their ship-carpenters, and materials for ship-building, will be employed in that way.

The foregoing is a summary of my capital movement, to facilitate which, I would, as has been before observed, advance a body of men from Coos. The mo-

tions of these should be regulated precisely by those of the main army, establishing posts as they go, for the purpose of retreat, in case of necessity, and to protect convoys, if the main army should be able to penetrate into Canada as far as Montreal. Several advantages will be derived from the advance of a body of troops by the way of Coos. First, strengthening the belief, that we mean to enter by the way of St. John's; secondly, it will serve to distract the enemy in their councils and measures, and either divide their force and render them weak at all points, or, by keeping them collected, expose the interior or exterior part of the country to a successful and fortunate blow from one or the other of these bodies; and it will, in the third place, open a communication for ample supplies of live cattle, if they should be required for troops in Canada.

Upon this plan, it is not only possible, but to be expected, that the enemy, if they should come at the knowledge of our real designs, would oppose their whole naval force to our troops on Lake Ontario, and their land force against those by the way of Coos. In this case I should be glad of solutions to the questions which follow.

9. Is there any practicable route from Johnson's Hall, or any other part of the Mohawk River, or from the upper parts of Hudson's River, to a river emptying itself into the St. Lawrence a little above La Galette, by which we could avoid Lake Ontario, and the armed vessels on those waters, altogether? And if this is not to be effected, and a superiority on the lake is despaired of, then I should wish to be informed,

10. Whether Niagara can be approached with an army and the necessary apparatus, by a route, which will avoid this Lake?

11. What will be the distance of the march from Fort Schuyler, the kind of country through which it is to be made, and the difficulties that are to be expected?

12. What will be the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining that post, after possessing it, Canada remaining in the hands of the enemy?

For the more certain reduction of Niagara, and for the peace and safety of the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia, a part of my plan is, to advance a body of troops from Pittsburg by way of the Allegany, Le Bœuf or French Creek, and Presqu'Isle to the above post, if it be practicable; of which I am not certain, as the enemy have armed vessels on Lake Erie, and I am ignorant of the kind of country between Presqu'Isle and Niagara, in case it is to be attempted by a land march. But admitting the impracticability of this, an expedition to Detroit, which Congress meditated last fall, and still have in contemplation, will keep the Indians in that quarter employed, and prevent them from affording succour to the garrison at Niagara. The preparations necessary to the one will answer for the other, while the one to Niagara may be concealed under the idea of going to Detroit.

Although, under the present appearances of things, it is a matter of very great doubt whether we shall be in circumstances to prosecute a project of this kind, I have nevertheless given orders for magazines of provisions to be laid in at Albany and on Connecticut River, from the lower Coos to Number Four, and have ordered the saw-mills about Fort Anne to be set to work, and shall be obliged to you for your advice to Colonel Lewis on this occasion. If it should fall in your way to ascertain with precision the number and strength of the vessels upon Lake Ontario, and down to La Galette, and the force of the garrisons at Niagara and Oswegatchie, I

shall thank you, and must beg leave to remind you of the mode you suggested to procure intelligence from Canada in the course of the winter, as it is of infinite importance to be well informed of the strength, expectations, and preparation of the enemy. To receive the account through different channels is also essential, to avoid deception.

I shall be very happy to see you at the head-quarters of the army, in your way to Philadelphia, whenever it happens. Governor Clinton wrote to me that he should be at Albany in the course of a few days. As I have implicit confidence in him, it will be quite agreeable to me, that you should converse largely with him upon the several matters herein contained, and then furnish me with your observations upon my plan, and the most effectual means of carrying it, or some other, into execution, with the necessary preparation to be made during the winter. With the greatest esteem and regard, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Fredericksburg, 23 November, 1778.

SIR,

Your Excellency's letter of the 18th, with the enclosure referred to, came to hand yesterday. I had before received the intelligence contained in Mr. Deane's letter, and in consequence made part of the detachments, which have been mentioned in my late letters. It is highly probable, that the late incursions and outrages were committed by the parties comprehended in Mr. Deane's intelligence; and I should hope, that the force already gone from the army, together with the season,

will prevent them at least from making further great depredations.*

Since I had the honor of addressing your Excellency, I received a letter from General Hand, an extract from which you will find enclosed, with copies of a letter from Major Whiting, and one from a Mr. Clyde. These will inform Congress, that, though the ravages at the Cherry Valley settlement were great in the late attack by the savages, yet our loss was much less than we had reason to apprehend from our former advices. The account of the enemy's having stormed the fort, and cut off Alden's regiment, happily turns out premature.†

A detachment of continental troops will conduct those of the convention from the North river to the Delaware. The German battalion is to compose part of the escort; and, after the convention troops cross to Pennsylvania, I have directed it, in consequence of the intelligence transmitted of late by Congress respecting the frontiers, to proceed to Easton with all its baggage, where it is to wait till General Hand arrives at Minisink, and whence it will be ready to act as circumstances may require. At the same time, if these frequent detach-

* Mr. Deane was a gentleman of education and respectability, who resided at this time with the Oneida Indians. Dr. Wheelock says of him, in a letter dated March 20th, 1775; "I have sent Mr. Deane to itinerate as a missionary this spring among the tribes, to strengthen that friendship and cultivate that acquaintance, which has lately commenced between us. His thorough acquaintance with the language and customs of the Six Nations (having been early naturalized and brought up among them), his great interest in their affections, as well as many other singular natural and acquired accomplishments, render him in my opinion the fittest man on earth to be employed in this affair." — *Memoirs of Eleazer Wheelock*, p. 328. Mr. Deane was interpreter to the commissioners of the northern Indian department, and was for some time in the service of Congress.

† This alludes to a report of a second attack on the fort at Cherry Valley. The first attack, in which Colonel Alden was killed, and the inhabitants massacred, took place on the 11th of November.

ments from the army could be avoided, it were much to be wished. The troops will be by this means in a very dispersed state; and, besides losing perhaps some advantages, which might present themselves if they were more collected, their discipline will be greatly injured, and it will be extremely difficult, from a variety of causes, to draw them together again; and, if it should be practicable, it is highly probable we shall find their number much impaired by desertion and otherwise.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT PULASKI.

Fredericksburg, 24 November, 1778.

SIR,

Your favor of the 15th by Count Kolkowski, I received a few days since. If I have a right idea of your situation at Rosencrantz, it will fulfil the object intended. Cole's Fort appeared a good position for covering a considerable part of the frontier; but any place in the vicinity of it will answer the purpose as well; and, as the circumstances you mention make that particular spot inconvenient, on the score of subsistence, you will either remain where you are, or choose for yourself such other position in the neighbourhood, as appears to you best adapted to the accommodation of your corps.

The motives, which incline you to leave this country at the present juncture, are laudable. When you have arranged the affairs of your corps, you have my consent to go to Philadelphia, as you propose. I assure you, Sir, I have a high sense of your merit and services, and the principles that influenced the part you have taken in the affairs of this country. The disinterested and unremitted zeal, which you have manifested in the ser-

vice, gives you a title to the esteem of the citizens of America, and has assured you mine. I gave Count Kolkowski a letter to Congress, in which I communicated your request. As you have signified to me your intention to return to Europe immediately, I have ordered Brigadier-General Hand to repair to Minisink and take the command.

I am, with great consideration, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 27 November, 1778.

SIR,

Congress will be pleased to accept my acknowledgments for the communication of the treaties between His Most Christian Majesty and the United States. The resolve respecting the exchange of prisoners has been transmitted to Sir Henry Clinton, and I have appointed commissioners, if he thinks proper, to meet his at Amboy on the 7th of next month.

I have the pleasure to inform Congress, that the whole army, one brigade and the light corps excepted, is now in motion to the places of the respective cantonments for winter-quarters. I have thought it prudent to delay this event awhile, to give time for the convention troops to make some progress in crossing the North River, to prevent a possibility of accident. The third division passes this day; and, if no unexpected interruption happens, the whole will be over by the 30th instant. When their passage is completed, the remaining troops kept in the field will immediately retire to quarters.

The disposition for winter-quarters is as follows. Nine brigades will be stationed on the west side of

Hudson's River, exclusive of the garrison at West Point; one of which, the North Carolina brigade, will be near Smith's Clove for the security of that pass, and as a reinforcement to West Point in case of necessity; another, the Jersey brigade, will be at Elizabethtown, to cover the lower part of Jersey; and the other seven, consisting of the Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania troops, will be at Middlebrook. Six brigades will be left on the east side of the river and at West Point; three of which (of the Massachusetts troops) will be stationed for the immediate defence of the Highlands; one at West Point, in addition to the garrison already there; and the other two at Fishkill and the Continental Village. The remaining three brigades, composed of the New Hampshire and Connecticut troops and Hazen's regiment, will be posted in the vicinity of Danbury, for the protection of the country lying along the Sound, to cover our magazines lying on Connecticut River, and to aid the Highlands on any serious movement of the enemy that way.

The park of artillery will be at Pluckemin. The cavalry will be disposed of thus; Bland's regiment at Winchester in Virginia, Baylor's at Frederic or Hagerstown in Maryland, Moylan's at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, and Sheldon's at Durham in Connecticut. Lee's corps will be with that part of the army which is in the Jerseys, acting on the advanced posts. This comprehends the general distribution of the army, except Clinton's brigade of New York troops, Pulaski's corps, and some detached regiments and corps stationed at Albany and at different parts of the frontier, of which Congress have already been particularly advised. General Putnam will command at Danbury, General McDougall in the Highlands, and my

own quarters will be in the Jerseys, in the neighbourhood of Middlebrook.

This disposition appeared to me the best calculated to reconcile, as far as possible, these several objects; the protection of the country; the security of the important posts in the Highlands; the safety, discipline, and easy subsistence of the army. To have kept the troops in a collected state would have increased infinitely the expense and difficulty of subsisting them, both with respect to forage and provisions; to have divided them into smaller cantonments would have made it far less practicable to maintain order and discipline among them, and would have put them less in a condition to control and prevent offensive operations on the side of the enemy, or to assemble to take advantage of any favorable opening, which their future situation may offer, should they be obliged to weaken themselves by further detachments, so far as to invite an enterprise against them.

By the estimate of the quartermaster and commissary general, it appears indispensable to have the principal part of the army on the other side of the North River. It was thought impracticable to furnish the necessary supplies of flour for the whole on this side of the river, from the immense difficulty and expense of transportation in the winter season, and from the exhausted state of the country with respect to forage. As this subject has been already fully before Congress, I shall not trouble them with a repetition of the details. In order as much as possible to reduce the demand of forage and facilitate the supplies, I have given directions, when the several divisions arrive at their cantonments, to send away to convenient places, at a distance from them, all the horses not absolutely requisite to carry on the ordinary business of the army.

It is unnecessary to add, that the troops must again have recourse to the expedient of hutting, as they did last year. But, as they are now well clad, and we have had more leisure to make some little preparations for winter-quarters, I hope they will be in a more comfortable situation, than they were in the preceding winter. With the highest respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOSEPH REED.

Fredericksburg, 27 November, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am upon the eve of my departure for winter-quarters, but shall not quit my present roof, until I acknowledge and thank you for your obliging favor of the 25th ultimo. Unless the officer, who commanded the dispersed dragoons of Baylor's regiment, was directed by Mr. Caldwell to Trenton, he was not only guilty of an unpardonable piece of indiscretion, but disobedience of orders; as he was instructed to collect the scattered remains of that regiment, and repair with them to such place, out of the common route of the wagons, as the quartermaster should direct. I have ordered an inquiry into his conduct on that occasion.

It is most devoutly to be wished, that some happy expedient could be hit upon to restore credit to our paper emissions, and punish the infamous practice of forestalling and engrossing such articles, as are essentially necessary to the very existence of the army, and which, by this means, come to it through the hands of these people at fifty per cent advance, to the great injury and depreciation of our money, by accumulating the quantum necessary for ordinary purposes to an

amazing sum, which must end in a total stagnation of all purchases, unless some remedy can be soon and effectually applied. It is also most devoutly to be wished, that faction was at an end, and that those, to whom every thing dear and valuable is entrusted, would lay aside party views and return to first principles. Happy, happy, thrice happy country, if such were the government of it! But, alas, we are not to expect that the path is to be strowed with flowers. That great and good Being, who rules the universe, has disposed matters otherwise, and for wise purposes I am persuaded.

As my letter to Congress of this date has given a full account of the cantonment of the troops, and other matters of public concernment, I have no need to repeat it to you as an individual member. The conduct of the enemy at New York and Rhode Island is too mysterious to be accounted for by any rule of common sense. The transports, containing their second embarkation, still remain in the harbour; for what purpose, it is not easy to conjecture.

I shall hope, when the army gets a little settled in winter-quarters, that the committee of arrangement will perfect the good work they began in the summer, and draw order from the chaos we have been in for a long time past. It is eleven o'clock at night, and I am to set out early in the morning; for which reason I shall only add my thanks for the favorable sentiments you are pleased to entertain for me, but in a more especial manner for your good wishes and prayers. With sincere esteem and affection, and with compliments to Mrs. Reed, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Fredericksburg, 27 November, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

You know, when a house is on the move and packing up, the family are commonly busy, and all is hurry; so it is when an army is changing its ground for new quarters. This circumstance must plead my excuse for not going fully into your letter. You are certainly right in your position, that we must act according to our powers, however they may place us in a situation different from what we wish. In pursuance of this, I have made a disposition of our army for the winter, more adapted to our circumstances in point of supplies, than if the troops had remained in a collected state; and though it is not so sparse and divided as the plan of cantonment mentioned in your letter, yet it has regard to the objects you had in view; and I am well pleased, that in the general it coincides with your sentiments. A more extended cantonment to the southward would have facilitated the means of support; but many inconveniences attend too great a dispersion of troops. I refer you to my letter of to-day to Congress, for their general and particular disposition. I must conclude, after expressing my obligations for your care of myself, and after assuring you that I am, with great regard and esteem, dear Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Paramus, 7 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I returned to this place from Elizabethtown, upon hearing that the enemy had gone up the North River,

in considerable force. Their ships proceeded as far as King's Ferry, at which place they landed a few men and burnt a small house upon the wharf. The boats and stores of every kind had been removed upon the first appearance of the ships. I do not know what was their true design; but they yesterday fell down again, without making any further attempts.

I have information through a channel, which has seldom deceived me, that the enemy intend shortly to make a forage upon the Monmouth coast. The distance of any Continental troops from that quarter, and the necessity they are under of employing every moment in providing covering for the winter, oblige me to desire your Excellency to give orders to the militia in that county to remove the stock, which is near the coast, and to have a particular regard to the houses of the disaffected, who always have previous notice of the designs of the enemy, and lay up stores of provisions, that they may be at hand when they make a descent. By doing this, they screen themselves from the charge of having voluntarily contributed. I shall set out tomorrow for Middlebrook, at which place I shall be happy to receive your Excellency's favors. I am, &c.

TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Middlebrook, 12 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 7th instant, by Mr. Laurens, came to my hands a day or two ago; previously to which I should have done myself the pleasure of congratulating you, which I now do very sincerely, on your late election to the government of Pennsylvania, had not Sir Harry's extra manœuvre up the North River kept me

upon the march and countermarch from the 5th till yesterday (when I arrived at these my quarters for the winter), and employed too much of my attention for investigating his designs, to allow me to indulge in more agreeable amusements.

What did or could prompt the knight to this expedition, I am at a loss to discover, considering the unseasonableness of it. Three things only appeared to me probable; a rescue of the convention troops, a stroke at the rear of our army, or a surprise of our posts in the Highlands. The two first I had seen perfectly out of his reach before I left the North River; and, not conceiving that he could be so much out in point of intelligence, as to mistime matters so egregiously, if either of the two first was his object, it followed, of consequence, that the last must be his aim; and, though I had left them as I thought in a state of security, and in the hands of a good officer, McDougall, I could not help being uneasy, lest a disaster might happen; and I posted back from Elizabethtown at four o'clock on the morning of the 5th and got within twelve or fifteen miles of King's Ferry, when I was met by an express, informing me that the enemy had landed at that place, burned two or three log-houses, with nine barrels of spoilt herrings, and had reëmbarked and sailed for New York again. Thus ended this notable expedition, which was conducted in the preparation with so much secrecy, that all the flag-boats to and from the city were stopped, and not a mouse permitted to creep within their lines. The only bad consequence we have felt from it, and, as the weather has turned out, not a trifling one, is, that it has delayed the Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania troops four days in hutting, and has occasioned them to march through snow and bad roads to come at their ground, instead of sunshine and good

ones, which was the case before the storm on Thursday last.

It gives me very sincere pleasure to find, that there is likely to be a coalition of the Whigs in your State, a few only excepted, and that the Assembly is so well disposed to second your endeavours in bringing those murderers of our cause, the monopolizers, forestallers, and engrossers, to condign punishment. It is much to be lamented, that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as pests to society, and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God, that some one of the most atrocious in each State was hung in gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by Haman. No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man, who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin.

General Lee's publication in Dunlap's Gazette of the 3d, and I have seen no other, puts me in a disagreeable situation.* I have neither the leisure nor inclination to enter the lists with him in a newspaper; and so far as his production points to personality, I can and do from my inmost soul despise it; but, when he has most barefacedly misrepresented facts in some places, and thrown out insinuations in others, that have not the smallest foundation in truth, not to attempt a refutation is a tacit acknowledgment of the justice of his assertions; for, though there are thousands, who know how unsupported his piece is, there are yet tens of thousands that know nothing of the matter, and will be led naturally to believe, that bold and confident assertions uncontradicted must be founded in truth.

* This was a long and elaborate article, signed by General Lee, and containing a free discussion of the affair at Monmouth, and of some points relating to his trial. Boastful and egotistic, it met with little favor from any party. It was reprinted in *Rivington's Gazette*.

It became a part of General Lee's plan, from the moment of his arrest, though it was an event solicited by himself, to have the world believe that he was a persecuted man, and party was at the bottom of it. But however convenient it may have been for his purposes to establish this belief, I defy him, or his most zealous partisans, to adduce a single instance in proof of it, unless bringing him to trial, at his own request, is considered in this light. I can do more; I will defy any person, out of my own family, to say that I have ever mentioned his name, if it was to be avoided; and, when not, that I have not studiously declined expressing any sentiment of him or his behaviour. How far this conduct accords with his, let his own breast decide. If he conceives that I was opposed to him, because he found himself disposed to enter into a party against me; if he thought I stood in his road to preferment, and that it was therefore convenient to lessen me in the esteem of my countrymen, in order to pave the way for his own advancement, I have only to observe, that, as I never entertained any jealousy of him, so neither did I ever do more, than common civility and proper respect to his rank required, to conciliate his good opinion. His temper and plans were too versatile and violent to attract my admiration; and that I have escaped the venom of his tongue and pen so long, is more to be wondered at than applauded; as it is a favor, of which no officer, under whose immediate command he ever served, has the happiness, if happiness can be thus denominated, of boasting.

Were I to give in to private conveniency and amusement, I should not be able to resist the invitation of my friends to make Philadelphia, instead of a squeezed-up room or two, my quarters for the winter. But the affairs of the army require my constant attention and

presence, and, circumstanced as matters are at this time, call for some degree of care and address to keep it from crumbling. As peace and retirement are my ultimate aim, and the most pleasing and flattering hope of my soul, every thing promotive of this end contributes to my satisfaction, however difficult and inconvenient in the attainment; and will reconcile any place and all circumstances to my feelings, whilst I continue in service.

The officers of the army must be grateful for your endeavours to serve them; and those of your own State will, I trust, feel the salutary effects of your exertions in their favor. They really merit it; and resignations must cease to be wonderful, when it is a fact too notorious to be denied, that officers cannot live in the army, under present circumstances, whilst they see others enriching themselves by an infinity of ways. These are severe tests of public virtue, and should not in point of policy be pushed too far. With sincere regard and affection, and with compliments to Mrs. Reed, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 13 December, 1778.

SIR,

It has not been in my power to return an answer to your favor of the 6th instant till now. The letter met me on the road, separated from my papers; and I did not reach this place till late on the 11th, since which I have been much employed in attending to the dispositions for hutting the army; but, in the mean time, the objects of the despatch have engaged my utmost attention.

The earnest desire I have to render the strictest compliance in every instance to the views and instructions of Congress, cannot but make me feel the greatest uneasiness, when I find myself in circumstances of hesitation or doubt with respect to their directions. But the perfect confidence I have in the justice and candor of that honorable body emboldens me to communicate without reserve the difficulties, which occur in the execution of their present order; and the indulgence I have experienced on every former occasion induces me to imagine, that the liberty I now take will not meet with their disapprobation.

I have attentively taken up the report of the committee of the 5th, approved by Congress, on the subject of my letter of the 11th ultimo, on the proposed expedition into Canada. I have considered it in several lights, and sincerely regret, that I should feel myself under any embarrassment in carrying it into execution. Still I remain of opinion, from a general review of things and the state of our resources, that no extensive system of coöperation with the French, for the complete emancipation of Canada, can be positively decided on for the ensuing year. To propose a plan of perfect cooperation with a foreign power, without a moral certainty of our supplies, and to have that plan actually ratified by the court of Versailles, might be attended, in case of failure in the conditions on our part, with very fatal effects.

If I should seem unwilling to transmit the plan as prepared by Congress, with my observations, it is because I find myself under a necessity, in order to give our minister sufficient ground on which to found an application, to propose something more than a vague and indecisive plan, which, even in the event of a total evacuation of these States by the enemy, may be ren-

dered impracticable in the execution by a variety of insurmountable obstacles; or, if I retain my present sentiments and act consistently, I must point out the difficulties as they appear to me; which must embarrass his negotiations, and may disappoint the views of Congress.

But, proceeding on the idea of the enemy's leaving these States before the active part of the ensuing campaign, I should fear to hazard a mistake as to the precise aim and extent of the views of Congress. The line of conduct, that I am to observe in writing to our minister at the court of France, does not appear sufficiently marked. Were I to undertake it, I should be much afraid of erring through misconception. In this dilemma I should esteem it a particular favor to be excused from writing at all on the subject, especially as it is the part of candor in me to acknowledge, that I do not see my way clear enough to point out such a plan for coöperation, as I conceive to be consistent with the ideas of Congress, and that will be sufficiently explanatory, with respect to time and circumstances, to give efficacy to the measure. But if Congress still think it necessary for me to proceed in the business, I must request their more definitive and explicit instructions, and that they will permit me, previous to transmitting the intended despatches, to submit them to their determination.

I could wish to lay before Congress more minutely the state of the army, the condition of our supplies, and the requisites necessary for carrying into execution an undertaking that may involve the most serious events. If Congress think this can be done more satisfactorily in a personal conference, I hope to have the army in such a situation before I can receive their answer, as to afford me an opportunity of giving my attendance. I

would only add, that I shall cheerfully comply with the directions of Congress relative to making every preparation in our power for an expedition against Niagara, and for such further operations to the northward, as time and circumstances shall enable us to carry on. Measures for the purpose have been taken in part for some time past; and I shall pursue them vigorously. The subject has long engaged my contemplation; and I am thoroughly convinced of the expediency and policy of doing every thing practicable on our part, for giving security to our frontiers by the reduction of those places, which facilitate annoying them, and even for accomplishing the annexation of Canada to the Union.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

P. S. I have detained the letter to the Marquis till your further instructions.† The waters have been so high, as to prevent the express from setting out yesterday with this despatch, as was intended.

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* By the direction of Congress, in conformity to the above suggestion, General Washington left camp on the 22d of December, and repaired to Philadelphia for the purpose of holding a personal conference, respecting military affairs. The following were the proceedings of Congress on the occasion.

"The President informed Congress, that General Washington was arrived in town, pursuant to their orders. Whereupon resolved, that the Commander-in-chief be introduced to Congress, and informed from the chair, that Congress have directed his attendance in order, among other things, to confer with him on the operations of the next campaign, and that a committee will be appointed for that purpose.

"Ordered, that the Secretary present the Commander-in-chief with the foregoing resolution, and acquaint him that Congress are now ready to receive him.

"In pursuance of the foregoing order, the Commander-in-chief attended; and, being informed by the President of the end for which Congress had desired his attendance, and that a committee will be appointed agreeably to the foregoing resolution, he withdrew." — *Journals, December 24th.*

† The Marquis de Lafayette arrived in Boston on the 11th of December, preparatory to his embarkation for France, having been nearly six weeks on his way from Congress. He was detained on the road at Fish-

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Middlebrook, 13 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Upon my arrival here, I found your favor of the 5th. Your own letter communicated the first hint, that I ever received, of any representations or reports made by the Board of War to Congress, respecting you or your command in Philadelphia. The Board some little time ago applied to me for a regiment or two to be stationed at Philadelphia and Trenton, to do the town duties and guard the stores, alleging that the militia complained of the hardship of being turned out for these purposes. I have accordingly ordered down Colonel Hogan's regiment of North Carolina troops, which is as much as I can with propriety spare. I have never heard, nor is it my wish to be acquainted with the causes of the coolness between some gentlemen composing the Board of War and yourself. I most sincerely hope, that they may never rise to such a height, as to oblige either party to make a public matter of it, as I am under more apprehensions on account of our own dissensions, than of the efforts of the enemy.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir, &c.

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kill three weeks by extreme illness. Fatigue and exposure in travelling through a storm of rain on horseback had produced a fever, which for a time raged so violently, that his life was despaired of. General Washington, whose head-quarters were a few miles from that place, was in a state of great anxiety, and by his personal visits and attentions exhibited proofs of his deep interest and warm attachment, which made a lasting impression upon his ardent young friend. Under the skilful treatment and constant attendance of Dr. Cochran, one of the principal physicians in the army, the disease took a favorable turn, and a natural vigor of constitution restored the patient, more speedily than could have been expected, to his accustomed health.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 16 December, 1778.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you, the gentlemen appointed to meet commissioners from Sir Henry Clinton, have returned to camp. Your Excellency will find, by a copy of their report, which, with the other papers respecting the meeting, is enclosed, that an exchange of prisoners has not taken place.

As an exchange has not been effected, and Sir Henry Clinton has called for all our officers on parole, I shall, in consequence of the resolution of the 19th ultimo, order the commissary of prisoners to require the immediate return of the convention and any other officers with the enemy on parole. I do not mean, however, to include General Burgoyne in the demand, unless Congress should direct it; as there appear to me many political reasons for permitting him to remain in Britain in his present temper. But if Congress should differ from me in opinion on this point, I shall be happy to be informed, that measures may be pursued for his recall.

I have the honor, to be, &c.*

* Sir Henry Clinton had written to General Washington, November 10th, proposing a meeting of commissioners to agree on an exchange of the convention troops. As Washington considered these troops under the exclusive charge of Congress, he forwarded the letter to that assembly, and they passed a resolve, authorizing an exchange upon the following principles; namely, that officers of equal rank should be first exchanged; next superior officers for an equivalent number of inferior; and if, after all the officers of the enemy should be exchanged, there should still be American officers in the hands of the British, these should be exchanged for an equivalent number of privates of the convention troops. Colonels Harrison and Hamilton were appointed by Washington as the American commissioners, and they met the British commissioners at Perth Amboy, on the 11th of December. The negotiation was ineffectual. The British commissioners wished to obtain a

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Middlebrook, 18 December, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your official letter of the 8th instant, advising that your relinquishment of the Presidency would soon take place, which I see has happened; and assuring me of the respect and esteem you

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larger proportion of privates than officers. They proposed to exchange one half of the officers in their hands for those of equal or equivalent rank, and to receive privates, according to such a ratio as should be agreed upon, for the other half. They urged as a reason, that it was unjust and inhuman to separate the officers from the soldiers, whom they had been accustomed to command, and who had been their companions in captivity. This was a doctrine, which, however conformable to military rule, had not before been advanced during the present war; and, on this occasion, neither its equity nor expediency was obvious. In truth, it was the interest of the British to recover their private soldiers, because, while prisoners in the country, they had many facilities and temptations to desert; and for the same reason it was the policy of Congress to retain them, at least till they could be exchanged on terms, that would have a reciprocal operation.

The following are the remarks of General Phillips on the subject. He had recently written to General Washington respecting an exchange of the convention troops, and was now on his march with them to Charlottesville. "Since I have been at Bethlehem," said he, "I have seen and read a Philadelphia newspaper containing the report made by your officers of their conference with Colonels O'Hara and Stephens. Had I seen it before, I believe I should not have troubled you with any overtures on my part; and yet I protest it to be my opinion, and I have not a doubt, that the American Congress will see the absolute necessity of allowing exchanges of complete corps of the troops of convention, if they mean really to promote or agree to any exchange. Upon any other condition there can be none; for it is obvious that a cartel upon the resolution of Congress, taken literally, renders all your officers into a free and full activity of service, whereas the officers of the troops of convention would gain a change of place only, but be equally lost to the service as at present, the corps to which they belong being still detained. Under this description, there needs not any interposition of a superior power; for the officers have too high a sense of honor to desire to quit their corps in the moment of distress, and therefore would not wish to be exchanged partially. To exchange by ransom would effect the whole business to a mutual benefit by a general release." — *MS. Letter, January 16th*, 1779.

should always retain for me. Permit me, in turn, Sir, to assure you, in the language of most unfeigned sincerity, that I hold myself under great obligations for the very polite and satisfactory manner, in which you have conducted the official intercourse, which has subsisted between us; and for the flattering marks of confidence and friendship, with which you have honored me in a private capacity. These considerations, and the most perfect conviction of your unwearied assiduity to promote the interest of America, in every instance in your power, have attached me to you, by the ties of the truest respect and affection; and wherever you may be, and in whatever situation, I shall ever wish you happy, and shall set a high value upon your friendship and correspondence.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN JAY, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 18 December, 1778.

SIR,

On Wednesday I had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 12th instant, with the enclosures. I very sincerely congratulate you, Sir, on the honorable and important station you are chosen to fill. The opinion I entertain of your public character concurs with every personal consideration to make the choice pleasing to me. At the same time that my warmest acknowledgments are due for the sentiments you express towards me, and the polite assurances you are pleased to give, I beg you to believe, that I shall by inclination embrace every opportunity of giving proofs of that respect and esteem, which I have ever been happy to pay to your worthy predecessors in office. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES OF VIRGINIA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 18 December, 1778.

My dear Sir,

You will be so obliging as to present the enclosed to the House, when opportunity and a suitable occasion offer. I feel very sensibly the late honorable testimony of their remembrance. To stand well in the good opinion of my countrymen constitutes my chiefest happiness, and will be my best support under the perplexities and difficulties of my present station.

I can assign but two causes for the enemy's continuance among us; and these are balanced so equally in my mind, that I scarcely know which of the two preponderates. The one is, that they are waiting the ultimate determination of Parliament; the other, that of our distresses, by which I know the commissioners went home not a little buoyed up, and, sorry I am to add, not without cause. What may be the effect of such large and frequent emissions, of the dissensions, parties, extravagance, and general laxity of public virtue, Heaven alone can tell. I am afraid even to think of it. But it appears as clear to me as ever the sun did in its meridian brightness, that America never stood in more eminent need of the wise, patriotic and spirited exertions of her sons than at this period; and, if it is not a sufficient cause for general lamentation, my misconception of the matter impresses it too strongly upon me, that the States, separately, are too much engaged in their local concerns, and have too many of their ablest men withdrawn from the general council, for the good of the common weal. In a word, I think our political sys-

tem may be compared to the mechanism of a clock, and that we should derive a lesson from it; for it answers no good purpose to keep the smaller wheels in order, if the greater one, which is the support and prime mover of the whole, is neglected.

How far the latter is the case, it does not become me to pronounce; but, as there can be no harm in a pious wish for the good of one's country, I shall offer it as mine, that each State would not only choose, but absolutely compel their ablest men to attend Congress; and that they would instruct them to go into a thorough investigation of the causes, that have produced so many disagreeable effects in the army and country; in a word, that public abuses should be corrected. Without this, it does not in my judgment require the spirit of divination to foretell the consequences of the present administration; nor to how little purpose the States individually are framing constitutions, providing laws, and filling offices with the abilities of their ablest men These, if the great whole is mismanaged, must sink in the general wreck, which will carry with it the remorse of thinking, that we are lost by our own folly and negligence, or by the desire perhaps of living in ease and tranquillity during the expected accomplishment of so great a revolution, in the effecting of which the greatest abilities, and the most honest men our American world affords, ought to be employed.

It is much to be feared, my dear Sir, that the States, in their separate capacities, have very inadequate ideas of the present danger. Many persons, removed far distant from the scene of action, and seeing and hearing such publications only, as flatter their wishes, conceive that the contest is at an end, and that to regulate the government and police of their own State is all that remains to be done; but it is devoutly to be wish-

ed, that a sad reverse of this may not fall upon them like a thunder-clap, that is little expected. I do not mean to designate particular States. I wish to cast no reflections upon any one. The public believe (and, if they do *believe* it, the fact might almost as well be so), that the States at this time are badly represented, and that the great and important concerns of the nation are horribly conducted, for want either of abilities or application in the members, or through the discord and party views of some individuals. That they should be so, is to be lamented more at this time than formerly, as we are far advanced in the dispute, and, in the opinion of many, drawing to a happy period; we have the eyes of Europe upon us, and I am persuaded many political spies to watch, who discover our situation and give information of our weaknesses and wants.* The story you have related, of a proposal to redeem the paper money at its present depreciated value, has also come to my ears; but I cannot vouch for the authenticity of it.

I am very happy to hear, that the Assembly of Virginia have put the completion of their regiments upon a footing so apparently certain; but, as one great defect of your past laws for this purpose has lain in the mode of getting the men to the army, I hope that effectual measures are pointed out in the present to remedy the evil, and bring forward all that shall be raised. The embargo upon provisions is a most salutary measure, as I am afraid a sufficiency of flour will not be obtained, even with money of higher estimation than ours. Adieu, my dear Sir. I am, &c.

* In writing to George Mason, he expressed similar sentiments. "I cannot refrain from lamenting," said he, "in the most poignant terms the fatal policy, too prevalent in most of the States, of employing their ablest men at home in posts of honor and profit, before the great national interest is fixed upon a solid basis."

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Middlebrook, 18 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I beg you will accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 30th ultimo, and the polite expressions of your friendship which accompany it. At the same time I am happy to congratulate you on your honorable acquittal with the approbation of Congress.* The information and remarks you have favored me with are very full and satisfactory, and I must request, as you are good enough to promise, that you will continue your reflections and inquiries on the subject, and communicate from time to time the result.

The difference of circumstances, which you have enumerated, between the time of General Amherst's operations and the present, is certainly very striking, and the difficulties of an expedition to Canada by the route he took, as things are now situated, great and many. The more I consider the subject, however, and examine into the state of our resources, the more I am convinced, that if an expedition is carried into that country, in the course of the next campaign, it must of necessity be done through that channel. The advantages of penetrating by Lake Champlain make the practicability of doing it infinitely desirable; but, upon the whole, I still am of opinion, that the prospect of effecting it is too small and precarious to warrant the

* The charge against General Schuyler was *neglect of duty*, in not being present at Ticonderoga, when it was evacuated by General St. Clair. The entire proceedings of the northern campaign of 1777, while General Schuyler had the command, were investigated by the court-martial at his request. He submitted in detail his letters, instructions, and orders. He was unanimously acquitted by the court "with the highest honor," and this acquittal was confirmed by Congress. — *Journals, December 3d.*

attempt. I could hardly rely upon the success of any expedient, that might be adopted to gain the superiority of the Lake in the summer. And I have greater reasons to believe, than when I had the pleasure of writing to you on the 20th ultimo, that an undertaking for that purpose this winter is entirely out of our power. My earnest desire of a winter expedition has led me closely to investigate our means of prosecuting it; and I find, after the fullest examination, from the concurrent and definitive reports of the quartermaster and commissary general, that our resources are unequal to the preparations necessary for such an enterprise.

How far it will be in our power to extend our operations into Canada during the next campaign, must depend on a variety of events, which cannot now be foreseen with certainty. It is to be lamented, too, that our prospects are not so favorable as we could wish. But I agree with you in the importance of reducing Niagara, at least, if practicable; and I think it prudent to be taking preparatory measures to enable us to attempt this, and as much more as the future situation of our affairs and resources may permit. I am the more induced to this, as the emancipation of Canada is an object, which Congress have much at heart. Conformably to this principle, I have directed the commissary-general to lay in as large magazines of flour and salt provisions at Albany and any other places, which may be thought proper, as he possibly can; and, in like manner, I have instructed the quartermaster-general to provide all the materials requisite for building vessels, together with forage and every other article, which comes under the direction of his department. A copy of my instructions to him is enclosed.

You will perceive I have referred the quartermaster-general to you for advice and directions in making his

arrangements. I have done the same with respect to the commissary. Every consideration induces me to wish and request your assistance in this business. No person, I know, has it more in his power to judge of the measures proper to be taken; and I am persuaded you will readily afford your aid in a matter of so great importance, as far as may be consistent with the situation of your public and personal concerns. Though we cannot now determine what will be the extent of our northern plan, nor consequently what number of troops will really be employed, yet, as it is necessary to fix some precise idea on this point, by which to regulate our preparations, you will adapt them to an army of at least ten thousand *effective* rank and file, with a proportion of artillery-men, attendants, and retainers of every kind, according to the nature of the expedition. It is not unlikely I may be at Albany in the month of January. This, in the mean time, I desire to be known only to you; but I must insist, that you will not suffer it to make the least alteration in your private plans. I am, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, your obedient humble servant.

TO BARON STEUBEN.

Middlebrook, 19 December, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving, a few days since, your letter of the 6th instant. I am much obliged to you for the polite assurances you give; and, in my turn, I beg you will believe, that when the institution, at the head of which you have been placed, can once be established upon a footing mutually agreeable to you and to the army, to which end all the measures I have taken

in it have been directed, I shall be happy to give you every support in my power to facilitate your operations. In doing this, I shall equally consult the personal consideration I have for you, and the improvement and benefit of the army; which I am persuaded will be greatly promoted by a full exertion of the talents, experience, and activity, of which you have already given the most satisfactory proofs.

I am with great esteem and regard, Sir, &c.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, AMERICAN MINISTER IN FRANCE.

Philadelphia, 28 December, 1778.

SIR,

The Marquis de Lafayette, having served with distinction as Major-General in the army of the United States for two campaigns, has been determined, by the prospects of a European war, to return to his native country. It is with pleasure, that I embrace the opportunity of introducing to your personal acquaintance a gentleman, whose merit cannot have left him unknown to you by reputation. The generous motives, which first induced him to cross the Atlantic; the tribute, which he paid to gallantry at the Brandywine; his success in Jersey before he had recovered from his wounds, in an affair where he commanded militia against British grenadiers; the brilliant retreat, by which he eluded a combined manœuvre of the whole British force in the last campaign; his services in the enterprise against Rhode Island; are such proofs of his zeal, military ardor, and talents, as have endeared him to America, and must greatly recommend him to his Prince.

Coming with so many titles to claim your esteem, it were needless for any other purpose, than to indulge my own feelings, to add, that I have a very particular friendship for him; and that whatever services you may have it in your power to render him will confer an obligation on one, who has the honor to be, with the greatest esteem, regard, and respect, Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Philadelphia, 29 December, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

This will be accompanied by a letter from Congress, which will inform you, that a certain expedition, after a full consideration of all circumstances, has been laid aside. I am sorry, however, for the delay it has occasioned you, by remaining so long undecided.*

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* The committee of Congress, appointed to confer with General Washington, reported against the Canada plan, after a mature discussion of the subject. — *Secret Journal*, Vol. II. p. 127. The report was approved by Congress, and the President was instructed to write the following letter to the Marquis de Lafayette.

"SIR,

"The Congress have directed me to inform you, that, although the emancipation of Canada is a very desirable object, yet, considering the exhausted state of their resources, and the derangement of their finances, they conceive it very problematical whether they could make any solid impression in that quarter, even on the uncertain contingency that the troops of Great Britain should evacuate the posts they now hold. More extensive and more accurate information, than they formerly possessed, has induced a conviction, that some capital movements meditated against that province are utterly impracticable from the nature of the country, the defect of supplies, and the impossibility of transporting them thither; to say nothing of the obstacles, which a prudent enemy might throw in the way of an assailing army. Under such circumstances, to enter into engagements with their allies appears not only imprudent but unjust.

"In any case, a perfect coöperation must depend upon a variety of

I am persuaded, my dear Marquis, that there is no need of fresh proofs to convince you, either of my affection for you personally, or of the high opinion I entertain of your military talents and merit. Yet, as you are on the point of returning to your native country, I cannot forbear indulging my friendship, by adding to the many honorable testimonies you have received from Congress the enclosed letter from myself to our minister at your court. I have there endeavoured to give him an idea of the value this country sets upon you; and the interest I take in your happiness cannot but make me desire you may be equally dear to your own. Adieu, my dear Marquis. My best wishes will ever attend you. May you have a safe and agreeable passage, and a happy meeting with your lady and friends. I am, &c.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

Philadelphia, 30 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have seen nothing since I came here, on the 22d instant, to change my opinion of men or measures; but abundant reason to be convinced, that our affairs are in

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incidents, which human prudence can neither foresee nor provide for. Under the present circumstances it cannot be expected. The consequence then would certainly be a misapplication and possibly the destruction of a part of the force of France; and that every force employed on a less hazardous expedition would equally call forth the attention of Great Britain, equally become the object of her efforts, and consequently give equal aid to the United States. Considering these, and other reasons of the like kind, Congress have determined, however flattering the object, not to risk a breach of the public faith, or the injury of an ally, to whom they are bound by principles of honor, gratitude, and affection. I am, &c.

"JOHN JAY, *President.*"

a more distressed, ruinous, and deplorable condition, than they have been since the commencement of the war. By a faithful laborer, then, in the cause; by a man, who is daily injuring his private estate, without even the smallest earthly advantage, not common to all in case of a favorable issue to the dispute; by one, who wishes the prosperity of America most devoutly, but sees it, or thinks he sees it, on the brink of ruin; you are besought most earnestly, my dear Colonel Harrison, to exert yourself in endeavouring to rescue your country, by sending your best and ablest men to Congress. These characters must not slumber nor sleep at home, in such a time of pressing danger. They must not content themselves with the enjoyment of places of honor or profit in their own State, while the common interests of America are mouldering and sinking into irretrievable ruin, if a remedy is not soon applied, and in which theirs also must ultimately be involved.

If I were to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men, from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say, that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them; that speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost of every order of men; that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day; whilst the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit, which in its consequences is the want of every thing, are but secondary considerations, and postponed from day to day, from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect. After drawing this picture, which from my soul I believe to be a true one, I need not repeat to you, that I

am alarmed, and wish to see my countrymen roused. I have no resentments, nor do I mean to point at any particular characters. This I can declare upon my honor; for I have every attention paid to me by Congress, that I can possibly expect, and I have reason to think, that I stand well in their estimation. But, in the present situation of things, I cannot help asking, where are Mason, Wythe, Jefferson, Nicholas, Pendleton, Nelson, and another I could name? And why, if you are sufficiently impressed with your danger, do you not, as New York has done in the case of Mr. Jay, send an extra member or two, for at least a certain limited time, till the great business of the nation is put upon a more respectable and happy establishment? Our money is now sinking fifty per cent a day in this city; and I shall not be surprised if, in the course of a few months, a total stop is put to the currency of it; and yet an assembly, a concert, a dinner, or supper, that will cost three or four hundred pounds, will not only take men off from acting in this business, but even from thinking of it, while a great part of the officers of our army, from absolute necessity, are quitting the service, and the more virtuous few, rather than do this, are sinking by sure degrees into beggary and want.

I again repeat to you, that this is not an exaggerated account. That it is an alarming one, I do not deny; and I confess to you, that I feel more real distress, on account of the present appearances of things, than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute. But it is time to bid you adieu. Providence has heretofore taken us up, when all other means and hope seemed to be departing from us. In this I will confide.

I am yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Philadelphia, 31 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

In a letter, which I had the pleasure of writing you on the 18th instant, I requested you to take the direction of the magazines, that were to be prepared towards a certain expedition. I should have extended the idea to your taking the full command in the northern department; but I was restrained by a doubt how far the measure might be agreeable to your own views and intentions. The same doubt still remains; but as it is very much my desire you should resume that command, I take occasion to signify it to you. At the same time, if you have any material objections against it, I would not wish to preclude their operation. If you have not, you will be pleased to consider this as an order for the purpose. As you are fully acquainted with all the objects of the command, it is unnecessary to enter into a detail of particular instructions. Your most obedient servant.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS APPOINTED TO CONFER WITH THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Philadelphia, 11 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

I have perused the letter, which you did me the honor to write, containing several subjects of consideration referred by Congress to the committee of conference, and on which you desire my opinion.* As I am not

* General Washington had presented a paper to the committee, containing *Minutes* of the several topics, which were likely to be brought forward in the conference, arranged in distinct heads, with brief re-

yet furnished with sufficient data relative to the first head, it will be necessary to defer touching upon it until I can by the means of the Board of War inform myself more fully of the object of the expedition, the orders or instructions given to General McIntosh, and some other fundamental points.*

I pass therefore to that, which regards the commissary of prisoners. His letter to Congress evidently proves the necessity of prescribing a proper line of conduct to him, which in my opinion will be sufficiently pointed out in the following instructions, namely, to reside at the head-quarters of the army; to make no exchanges but such as are directed by Congress, the Board of War, or the Commander-in-chief, (the directions of the two former to pass through the hands of the latter;) and, whenever he has occasion to send a flag into the enemy's lines with provisions for prisoners, or any other business, to make application to the Commander-in-chief, who will judge of the cause and the propriety in point of time. The exclusive privilege, which Mr. Beatty seems to require, of regulating the

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marks or hints under each. In reference to this paper, the committee wrote on the 9th of January, — "In order to give despatch to the several matters mentioned in your Excellency's report to the committee, it is proposed to offer resolutions to Congress on the heads you enumerate. We wish that the remedy may be effectual, and think it happy that we can be favored by your assistance. We therefore request that you will be pleased to point out what ought to be done, with respect to the arrangement of the army, the department of artillery and ordnance, the clothing department, the inspectorship, and the branch of engineers. Indeed, we think it would be advisable to vest the Commander-in-chief with power to make these and every other arrangement for the good government of the army, by forming a complete system to be adopted by Congress as their act. We submit this last suggestion to your Excellency's consideration, being unwilling to throw any burden upon you, which may be disagreeable."

* General McIntosh commanded in the western department, with his head-quarters at Pittsburg.

intercourse by flags, both with regard to the object and the time of sending them, astonishes me. It would give him powers, which no commissary of prisoners has ever yet been vested with. They must be dangerous, and certainly are unnecessary, as the commissary can have no business in the course of his office, with which the Commander-in-chief ought to be unacquainted.

In order to preserve harmony and correspondence in the system of the army, there must be a controlling power, to which the several departments are to refer. If any department is suffered to act independently of the officer commanding, collisions of orders and confusion of affairs will be the inevitable consequences. This induces me to repeat, that all orders from Congress or the Board of War to any department or officer should be communicated through the Commander-in-chief, or, in the case of a separate command, through the commandant.*

It was absolutely necessary, that the open and free intercourse with New York, which I found prevailing on my arrival at Elizabethtown, the 1st of December, should be restrained; and I gave positive orders to General Maxwell to suffer no person to pass, unless permission should be previously obtained from the governors of the respective States, or myself; and I requested Governors Livingston and Reed to fix on the first day of every month for this purpose, to which they readily acceded.

January 12th. — Since writing the above, I have endeavoured to gain every information relative to the western expedition, but have not been able to arrive at

* The above suggestions, respecting the commissary of prisoners, and the several departments of the army, were confirmed by a resolve of Congress. — *Journals, January 23d.*

such a knowledge of the state of affairs in that quarter, and the present views of the commanding officer, as are essential to forming an explicit opinion. The object was to give peace and security to our frontiers, by expelling the Indians and destroying their principal points of support. In prosecuting a plan for this purpose, much expense has already been incurred, and the end is not yet obtained. Neither is it in my power to determine, from any thing that has been communicated to me, in what train the operations are. But it appears to me, that, previous to renouncing the expedition, the commanding officer should be consulted. A sudden abandonment of the undertaking would occasion not only the sinking of the whole expense, without reaping any benefit, but likewise on the other hand would give confidence to our enemies, and expose us to more frequent and destructive inroads.

By General McIntosh's letter to the Board of War, it evidently appears, that he has been disappointed in his expectations of men, provisions, and stores. His orders seem to have been precise, his anxiety great; and, though he may not advance agreeably to his own expectations and the views of Congress, yet, as a certain progress has been made, as the causes which gave rise to the expedition still exist, and security to our frontiers is not to be obtained by a defensive plan, my sentiments with respect to his future conduct, from the light in which I view the matter, are these. That General McIntosh should, if he has not already done so, decide finally, whether, with his present force, provisions, stores, prospect of supplies, and means of transportation, he can advance to Detroit, and whether the advantages or disadvantages of a winter expedition preponderate. If these should be determined in the affirmative, his plan should be prosecuted with vigor;

if in the negative, the militia should be discharged, every useless mouth dismissed, and the winter spent in forming magazines, building batteaux, or such canoes as can be transported into Lake Erie, by the way of Scioto or Le Bœuf, and will serve to coast it in when there. A time and place should be appointed for rendezvous, in the spring, of such further force as shall be judged necessary for the operations of the campaign, and effectual measures should be taken in the mean time to secure such force. I do not conceive, that more pointed directions than these can be given at this time, unless General McIntosh's situation and views were better understood. My ideas of contending with the Indians have been uniformly the same; and I am clear in the opinion, that the cheapest (though this may also be attended with great expense) and most effectual mode of opposing them, where they can make incursions upon us, is to carry the war into their own country. For, supported on the one hand by the British, and enriching themselves with the spoils of our people, they have every thing to gain and nothing to lose, while we act on the defensive; whereas the direct reverse would be the consequence of an offensive war on our part.

The western expedition, upon the present plan, stands unconnected with any other; consequently General McIntosh looked only to one object, and doubtless pursued the route, which, in his judgment, led most directly to it; but, considering that his operations and those to the northward might have a correspondence, if his are delayed till the spring, they might be varied so as to answer his object as well, if not better, and they would at the same time favor the other expedition. The establishing of posts of communication, which the General has done for the

security of his convoys and army in case of accident, is a proceeding grounded on military practice and experience. These works do not appear to have occasioned any additional expense. I am, &c.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 15 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

The minutes I had the honor of submitting to the consideration of the committee, were intended as the basis of a conference on the several points therein contained, in order that, after an interchange of ideas and information, we may be the better able to form a just judgment of the system of conduct and measures, which it will be proper for us to pursue. It is essential to consider the subject in several points of light, in which, for want of information, I feel myself greatly at a loss. The question does not turn upon military principles only. The state of European politics, and our own prospect of finance and supplies of every kind, are essential to a right determination. My situation has not put it in my power to be as fully acquainted with these, as I could wish; and, so far as they are concerned, my reasoning must be imperfect. Yet, as the committee express a desire to have my ideas more explicitly on the objects proposed to them, I shall endeavour to comply with their expectations in the best manner I can, under my present disadvantages, confining myself principally to a view of our own internal circumstances and prospects.

The first object to which I took the liberty to call their attention was the recruiting of the army, towards which two modes were suggested; first, to enlist all the

men now in it during the war, who are engaged for any term short of that, and to spare no bounty for that purpose; secondly, to draft upon some plan similar to the one recommended to the committee at Valley Forge last February.

Whether it will be necessary to adopt one or both of these expedients, will depend on what shall be determined respecting the plan of operation for the next campaign. If the general principles of it be offensive, we must unite the two; if defensive, the first may answer. I said in that case no bounty ought to be spared; but when I reflect upon the enormous State bounties already given, I can hardly advise an addition to the Continental bounty, nor am I clear whether it would have the effect intended. If all the State bounties in money could be abolished, from the inequality, interference, and competition of which I am persuaded the recruiting service has greatly suffered, I should recommend the Continental bounty to be raised as high as a hundred and fifty dollars, or perhaps higher, and that this should be extended to recruiting in the country as well as in the army. The expense on this plan would be less, and the success I believe greater. Adequate provisions should also be made for the officers employed in the recruiting service.

In reasoning upon a plan of operating for the next campaign, we ought, in my opinion, to suppose that the enemy will hold their present posts. Many strong arguments may be advanced for and against it; and in the present state of our information from Europe, so far as it has come to my knowledge, I do not think we have any sufficient ground to conclude they will leave us. It is safest to suppose they will not, and to prepare for it. For if they do, though we may not be able immediately to take full advantage of their departure, for

want of having turned our preparations into a right channel, yet this will be only an inconvenience. On the other hand, if we were to take our measures on the presumption of an evacuation, and this should not happen, we might be ruined by the mistake. One is a question of convenience, the other of safety.

On the supposition of a continuance of the war in America, in its present form, there are three points of view in which the conduct proper to be observed by us may be considered; one, the endeavouring to expel the enemy from their present posts in our front, and directing our whole effort to that object; another, the undertaking of an expedition against Niagara, to give effectual security to our frontier and open a door into Canada, remaining upon the defensive in this quarter; lastly, the remaining entirely on the defensive, except such smaller operations against the Indians, as will be absolutely necessary to divert depredations from us. The first is the most desirable; because, if it could succeed, it would be decisive, and put us out of the reach of contingencies; the inquiry is, how far it may be practicable.

The enemy's force at New York and Rhode Island, independently of the aid they might on any pressing exigency draw from the refugees and militia of the places in their possession, induced partly by inclination and partly by compulsion, may be estimated at about twelve or thirteen thousand effective men. Although this force is now divided, it can so easily be assembled, that, in operating against it in one point, we must expect to meet with the united opposition of the whole. As to the force on our part, sufficient to carry our point against the whole, double the number is the least it could be undertaken with, and this would be far from giving a certainty of success. The insular

situation of the enemy's posts, assisted by strong fortifications and by their shipping, would be obstacles not easily to be overcome.

According to this estimate, the smallest number with which the attempt could be undertaken, would be twenty-six thousand effective men. If I am not mistaken, this is a larger number than we have ever had in the field; and besides these, we should be still necessitated to keep bodies of troops on the frontiers and at other posts. This is a force, which, it must be feared, we should find it very difficult if not impossible to raise. Our resources of men, I believe, rather decrease. There is abundant employment in every branch of business; wages, in consequence, have become so high, and the value of our money so low, that little temptation is left to men to engage in the army. We have tried the effect of drafting, and cannot expect more success than last year; so that, upon the whole, it is probable our force, after every exertion, would be rather less than it was in the preceding campaign; and even if it should be equal, it would be considerably short of what is required.

But if the men were to be had, a question arises, whether they could be subsisted. The difficulty and expense would be excessive, and it is much to be doubted, whether our money, though aided by every exertion of government, would be able to bring out the resources of the country to answer so immense a demand. Indeed, I am not altogether clear, that the resources of the country are in themselves equal to it. There is at this time an alarming scarcity of bread and forage; and, though it may be in a great measure artificial, yet there are symptoms of its being in some degree real. The great impediment to all vigorous measures is the state of our currency. What pros-

pects there are of relieving it, what is to be expected from the measures taken to that effect, the committee, to whom the subject is familiar, and by whom it is best understood, will judge. But I fear their operations will be too slow to answer the purposes of the next campaign; and, if the vast expenditures necessary to the plan under consideration were to be made, I should have little hope of the success of any project for raising the value of the currency, that can be adopted.

One powerful objection to the undertaking is, that, if we fail in it, after straining all the faculties of the state to the highest pitch, a total relaxation and debility might ensue, from which perhaps we should not be able to recover. But though I should be extremely doubtful of our ability to force the enemy from both their present posts, and very apprehensive of the consequences of an ineffectual attempt, yet I should think it might not be impracticable to oblige them to abandon one, that is, Rhode Island, and collect their whole force at the other. The manner of doing this would be by an attack upon New York, so as to force the garrison of Rhode Island to come to its succour. But in order to do this, the exertion of our whole strength would be necessary, and perhaps the object may not be thought adequate to the exertions.

The next plan suggested is to make an expedition against Niagara, and remain upon the defensive here. This would not require so many men as the other, but it would be more expensive. Not less than a force equal to that of the enemy could with propriety be left here, say thirteen thousand. In estimating the force requisite against Niagara, we must provide for establishing posts of communication as we advance, to protect our convoys and secure a retreat in case of disaster. We must also lay our account in having to

do with the whole force of the garrison of Detroit and Niagara, reinforced by all the hostile Indians and other banditti, who have hitherto infested our frontiers; and we must even go further, and look towards a reinforcement from Canada. On a suspicion of our intentions against Niagara, a part of the troops from Canada would naturally be sent to the aid of that important fortress. The number, then, necessary for this expedition, to give a moral certainty of success, cannot be less than seven or eight thousand men. This will make twenty or twenty-one thousand requisite for the execution of the second plan. In addition to these, an extraordinary number of artificers, and a number of sailors and batteau-men, will be wanted, over and above the ordinary attendants of an army. This must be included in the general estimate of numbers and expense. The building and equipping of ships and boats, and providing of other apparatus peculiar to an expedition of this nature, will be an immense addition to the article of expense. The difficulty and consequently expense of supplies of every kind will be greater, than in the operations to which we have been accustomed, on account of the remoteness of the scene of action from the source of supplies, and the nature of the country through which they are to be transported. Considering these things, which I have more fully delineated in my letter to Congress on the Canadian expedition, it will appear pretty evident, that the expense of the second plan under consideration will be greater than that of the first. Most of the objections, that militate against the other, apply to this. The object is certainly less; and it will not perhaps be thought sound policy to exhaust our strength and resources in distant and indecisive expeditions, while there is still a possibility of our having a call for our

utmost efforts for the interior defence and absolute safety of these States.

It is much to be regretted, that our prospect of any capital offensive operations is so slender, that we seem in a manner to be driven to the necessity of adopting the third plan, that is, to remain entirely on the defensive; except such lesser operations against the Indians, as are absolutely necessary to divert their ravages from us. The advantages of this plan are these. It will afford an opportunity of retrenching our expenses and of adopting a general system of economy, which may give success to the plans of finance, which Congress have in contemplation, and perhaps enable them to do something effectual for the relief of public credit, and for restoring the value of our currency. It will also give some repose to the country in general, and, by leaving a greater number of hands to cultivate the lands, remove the apprehension of a scarcity of supplies.

If this plan is determined upon, every measure of government ought to correspond. The most uniform principle of economy should pervade every department. We should not be frugal in one part and prodigal in another. We should contract, but we should consolidate our system. The army, though small, should be of a firm and permanent texture. Every thing possible should be done to make the situation of the officers and soldiers comfortable, and every inducement offered to engage men during the war. The most effectual plan that can be devised for enlisting those already in the army, and recruiting in the country, ought to be carried into immediate execution.

I shall not enter particularly into the measures that may be taken against the Indians, but content myself with the general idea thrown out, unless it should be

the pleasure of the committee that I should be more explicit. The main body of the army must take a position so as to be most easily subsisted, and at the same time best situated to restrain the enemy from ravaging the country. If they should hereafter weaken themselves still more, so as to give a favorable opening, we should endeavour to improve it.

This plan may perhaps have some serious disadvantages. Our inactivity will be an argument of our weakness, and may injure our credit and consequence with foreign powers. This may influence the negotiations of Europe to our disadvantage. I would not suppose it could alienate our allies, or induce them to renounce our interests. Their own, if well understood, are too closely interwoven with them; their national faith and honor are pledged. At home, too, it may serve to dispirit the people, and give confidence to the disaffected. It will give leisure for factious and discontented spirits to excite divisions. If the enemy were once expelled, no European misfortunes on our side would probably tempt England to recommence the war in America; but, if they possess a footing among us, and have an army and a fleet on our coast, an adverse turn of affairs with our allies might enable them to renew their exertions here. How far these inconveniences ought to determine us to one great, vigorous effort at all hazards, Congress can alone be a competent judge.

The degree of probability there is, that the enemy will evacuate these States, has for some time past rendered it a favorite object with me to make eventual preparations for operating against Niagara in particular, and Canada in general, in case that event should happen. I have given pretty extensive directions for this purpose. But the more closely I look

into the state of our finances and resources, the more I am shaken in my judgment of the propriety of contracting very great certain expense for an uncertain advantage. If the enemy go away, it will be extremely disagreeable to be unprepared for improving the opportunity; but, when I consider the necessity of economy in our present circumstances, I am almost ready to submit to that inconvenience. I shall however be glad to receive explicit instructions on this head.

I shall beg leave for the present to confine my observations to these points, and defer giving my sentiments on other matters submitted, till these are determined. I am in some dilemma with respect to the propriety of my continuance in the city. Many reasons operate to make my presence with the army proper; and my stay here will become peculiarly ineligible, if an offensive plan should be preferred. I submit it to the committee whether the other matters may not be as well transacted by letter from camp, as by my remaining here.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Philadelphia, 18 January, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Since my arrival in this city, to which I was called by Congress to confer with them on matters relative to our future operations, several circumstances have, in the course of our inquiries and deliberations, convinced us of the necessity of contracting our system. It has therefore been determined to lay the Niagara expedition entirely aside for the present, and to con-

tent ourselves with some operations on a smaller scale against the savages, and those people who have infested our frontier the preceding campaign. I shall, when I am somewhat more at leisure, take an opportunity of informing you more fully of the causes of this alteration of measures.

I was exceedingly sorry to be made acquainted with your determination to resign your command in the army. I can say with truth, that I should have been happy to derive that assistance from you, in your military capacity, which I shall always take the liberty of asking, as from my private friend and a friend to his country. I had pleased myself with hopes of seeing you in Albany this winter; but I shall be detained here so much longer than I expected, that I have given up all thoughts of that kind.

I am, yours, &c.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 20 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

That the officers of the army are in a very disagreeable situation, that the most unhappy consequences are to be apprehended, if they are not speedily placed in a better, and that some provision, more adequate than has yet been made, is necessary, are truths so obvious and so generally acknowledged, that it would almost seem superfluous to say any thing to enforce them. But it is a point in which, in my opinion, the public safety is so essentially concerned, that I cannot let slip any opportunity of urging its importance, and pressing it upon the public attention. I have more than once intimated, that even a disso-

lution of the army is not an improbable event, if some effectual measures were not taken to render the situation of the officers more comfortable. If this event has not yet happened, we ought not to infer from thence, that it will not happen. Many favorable circumstances have intervened to protract it, but the causes that lead to it are daily increasing. Had it not been for the happy change, which took place in our political affairs last winter, and the new prospects it opened, which for a time diverted the minds of the officers from an attention to their distresses, and encouraged a hope of their having a speedy termination, it is much to be doubted, from the discontents which then prevailed, whether we should now have more than the shadow of an army. The temporary consolation derived from this source has subsided, their passions have returned into their former channels, the difficulty of supplying their wants has greatly increased, the expectation of the war being near its end has vanished, or at least lost a great part of its force, and the large fortunes acquired by numbers out of the army afford a contrast, that gives poignancy to every inconvenience from remaining in it. The officers have begun again to realize their condition, and I fear few of them can or will remain in the service on the present establishment; and it is unnecessary to add, that an army cannot exist without officers.

The patience of the officers has been a long time nourished by the hope, that some adequate provision was in contemplation. Though nothing satisfactory has hitherto been done, their hopes have been still kept alive; but this cannot be much longer the case, and when they come once to fix an opinion, that they have nothing to expect, they will no longer combat the necessity, that drives them from the service. It is worthy

of observation, that the state of inactivity, to which we may probably be compelled the next campaign, will give leisure for cherishing their discontents, and dwelling upon all the hardships of their situation. When men are employed, and have the incitements of military honor to engage their ambition and pride, they will cheerfully submit to inconveniences, which in a state of tranquillity would appear insupportable. Indeed, not to multiply arguments upon a subject so evident, it is a fact not to be controverted, that the officers cannot support themselves with their present pay; that necessity will oblige them to leave the service unless better provided for; and that, remaining in it, those who have no fortunes will want the common necessaries of life, and those who have fortunes must ruin them.

After the steps, which have been already taken in the affair of a half-pay and pensionary establishment, it is not without great reluctance I venture to revive it. But I am so thoroughly convinced of its utility, that notwithstanding some disadvantages, which may attend it, I am firmly persuaded it would in the main be promotive of the public good. I therefore take the liberty to bring it a moment under review.

I beg leave to repeat what I have said upon former occasions, that no step could in my opinion be taken, which would be so pleasing to the officers, and which would bind them so forcibly to the service. Our military system would certainly derive infinite benefit from it; and it appears to me, that it ought to be a primary object of Government to put that upon the best footing our circumstances will permit. On principles of economy I think there can be no solid objection to the plan. No mode can, I believe, be devised to give satisfaction, which will be more convenient and less expensive.

The difference indeed in point of expense, between the present form of the half-pay establishment, and one for life, would be inconsiderable. Seven years will probably be the period of the lives of the greatest part of the incumbents, and few of the survivors will much exceed it. But the difference in the provision in the estimation of the officer's own mind is very great. In one case he has provision for life, whether it be long or short; in the other, for a limited period, which he can look beyond, and naturally flatters himself he shall outlive.

The resolve directing the half-pay for seven years contains some provisos and restrictions, which, though perhaps unimportant in themselves, were interpreted in a manner that gave an unfavorable aspect to the measure, and more than disappointed its intended effect. With respect to a pensionary establishment for officers' widows, nothing can be a more encouraging reflection to a married man, than that, in case of accident to himself, his family is left with some dependence to preserve them from want, and nothing can be a more discouraging and painful one than the reverse. The chief objection, which I have heard to this plan, is, that the principle of pensioning is incompatible with the maxims of our government. The truth of this objection I shall not controvert, but I think it applies equally to an establishment for seven years, as to one for life. It is alike a pension in both cases, in one for a fixed and determinate, in the other for a contingent period. All that can be said is, that we submit to one inconvenience to avoid a greater; and, if it operates as a bad precedent, we must endeavour to correct it when we have it in our power.

One thing however I think it important to observe, that, unless the committee should be fully convinced of

the necessity of the establishment proposed, and should be clearly of opinion, that it will meet the concurrence of Congress, the best way will be, not to put it to the experiment of a debate. If it be once known, that such a question is in agitation, it will again raise the hopes and solicitude of the officers, and, if it fails, renew all their former discontents on the same subject, and, under their present circumstances and feelings, with redoubled violence. It is a point in which their feelings are much engaged, and these ought not to be awakened if they are not to be gratified.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 29 January, 1779.

SIR,

My long and unexpected stay in this city being attended with many inconveniences to the common business of the army, and in other respects, I feel myself under a necessity of requesting the permission of Congress to return; and, if consistent with their views, I should be glad to set out for the camp at Middlebrook on Monday next. There are several matters, that have been the subjects of conference between the committee and myself, which are yet undecided, and which, with other points that may occur occasionally, may be proper subjects for an intercourse

* As a farther reward and inducement to the officers, General Washington recommended, that Congress should make effectual arrangements to supply them with clothing, at a price proportioned to their pay and the value of the currency, or should give them an equivalent in money; and also that their rations and subsistence money should be estimated from time to time, according to the prices of the articles they were obliged to purchase.

by letter, if it should be the pleasure of Congress to continue the committee for this purpose; of the expedience and propriety of which they will judge. I shall wait the orders of Congress, and have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 8 February, 1776.

SIR,

I have despatched orders to the infantry of Count Pulaski's legion, to march immediately from Minisink to Lancaster, at which place they will expect further orders for proceeding. The horse of the legion, not being in this quarter, will receive orders from the Count himself. In obedience to the resolve directing Count Pulaski and Colonel Armand to complete their corps of infantry to the full complement, I have informed them of the terms on which recruits for the war are to be raised; but it will rest with Congress to give those gentlemen proper authority to recruit, as I do not conceive that any of the States will suffer them to enlist men within their bounds, without a special license for that purpose. I have informed them of this, and have desired them to make application to Congress on the subject.* I am informed by Colonel Laumoy,

* Count Pulaski's legion was under the immediate direction of Congress, and not attached to the line of any State. The reason why a particular State might object to his enlisting men within its limits, without special authority from Congress, was, that it would interfere with the State enlistments for making up the quota of Continental troops. Congress removed the objection by passing a resolve, that the recruits enlisted into the corps of Count Pulaski, or that of Colonel Armand, which was on a similar footing, should be credited to the quota of the State to which they belonged. —*Journals, February 13th.*

that he is already ordered by General Duportail to repair to South Carolina. I shall take every possible measure to complete the arrangement of the army as expeditiously as possible. I am, &c.

TO COUNT PULASKI.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 8 February, 1779.

SIR,

In consequence of the resolution of Congress directing your legion to proceed to South Carolina, to act under the command of Major-General Lincoln, or the commanding officer of the southern department, I have ordered the infantry of your corps, which were stationed at Minisink, to march immediately to Lancaster in Pennsylvania. You will be pleased to inform yourself of the nearest route to your place of destination, and put the troops in motion as soon as possible. I make no doubt, that you will give such orders as may seem best calculated to facilitate the march, without overfatiguing the men, or rendering the horses unfit for service, and will do every thing in your power to keep the men together, and prevent the destruction of property. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 12 February, 1779.

SIR,

In my last, I omitted to answer that part of your Excellency's letter of the 5th instant, respecting Captain Campbell's proposal of attempting to bring off our

officers, prisoners on parole upon Long Island. Were the measure justifiable, of which I have my doubts, it would in my opinion be impolitic. We could not hope to be completely successful; and strict confinement would certainly be the fate of all those who remained, or who may hereafter fall into the enemy's hands.

I have good reason to suspect, that many persons, women particularly, who obtain leave from the Executive Council to go and come to and from New York, under the pretence of visiting their friends, have in fact no other business, but that of bringing out goods to trade with. Some have been detected within a few days, and their goods confiscated to the captors, by a law of the State of Jersey. To avoid the disagreeable necessity of seizing the property of individuals, and to put a stop to a commerce, which creates a great deal of uneasiness among the well-affected inhabitants, I shall be obliged to you for inquiring well into the circumstances of those, who apply for passes; and, if their applications appear so well grounded as to obtain them, to caution them against bringing out any kind of goods, as they will most certainly fall into the hands of the guards posted upon every road, in order to cut off this pernicious communication, which is contrary to a resolve of Congress, and also to positive laws of this State. The property has hitherto been only confiscated; but, if the practice be persisted in, there will be a necessity of inflicting a punishment upon the persons of those, who knowingly and repeatedly violate the laws. If, as is urged by some, it is good policy to get goods out of New York by any means, let the license be general; but, in the present situation of things, I cannot, consistently with my feelings and my duty, suffer those only to reap the benefit of a

trade, who from their peculiar characters can gain admittance within the enemy's lines. I am, &c.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Middlebrook, 17 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Although I have delayed till now to give you the trouble of a line, I am not the less impressed with a sense of your politeness and civilities to me while I had the honor of being under your roof. I shall think myself very happy, if any poor cottage, of which I may happen to be master, can be honored with your company. We have nothing new in this quarter, but we are told that something great and good is in store for us at Congress; nothing less, in short, than an alliance with Spain, and a loan from that court, of thirteen millions of dollars. When I said we had nothing new, I ought to have excepted a piece of intelligence, that the enemy on Staten Island are busy in preparing fascines. The design of them we are as yet ignorant of. I am a little impatient to hear something further from Georgia. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her sincere thanks for your kind attention to her while she was in the city of Philadelphia, and joins in respectful compliments with, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 26 February, 1779.

SIR,

Yesterday morning a detachment of the enemy from Staten Island made an attempt to surprise the post at

Elizabethtown. On receiving information of it, General St. Clair with the Pennsylvania division, and General Smallwood with the Maryland division, were put in motion by different routes to form a junction at the Scotch Plains, and proceed to reinforce General Maxwell and act as circumstances should require. Intelligence of the sudden retreat of the enemy occasioned their recall before they had advanced far. The enclosed copy of a letter from General Maxwell will furnish all the particulars I have received of this fruitless incursion.

Through hurry of business in Philadelphia and since my arrival here, the papers relating to the inquiry into the conduct of the late quartermaster-general have till now escaped a particular consideration. A difficulty occurs in executing the direction of Congress for bringing the affair to a military decision, which requires to be explained. It is a received opinion, that Major-General Mifflin has resigned his commission in the army. If this be true, as he is no longer an officer, I should not conceive that he can be amenable to a military tribunal. I request to be favored with information on this head. With very great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BARON STEUBEN.

Head-Quarters, 26 February, 1779.

Sir,

Captain Walker delivered me your favor of the 10th instant, with the sequel of your manuscript. Enclosed, I transmit to you my remarks on the first part. The remainder shall follow, as soon as other affairs of equal importance will permit. I very much approve the con-

ciseness of the work, founded on your general principle of rejecting every thing superfluous; though perhaps it would not be amiss, in a work of instruction, to be more minute and particular in some parts. One precaution is rendered necessary by your writing in a foreign tongue, which is to have the whole revised and prepared for the press by some person, who will give it perspicuity and correctness of diction, without deviating from the appropriate terms and language of military science. These points cannot be too closely attended to, in regulations which are to receive the sanction of Congress, and are designed for the general government of the army. I am with great regard and esteem, &c.*

TO COLONEL THEODORIC BLAND.

Head-Quarters, 28 February, 1779.

SIR,

The Board of War, having received disagreeable accounts of the situation of matters at the convention barracks, are of opinion, that order can be restored only by the presence of a sensible, discreet officer, charged with the general direction of their affairs, and having sufficient weight and knowledge of business, to regulate the uneasy and discordant spirits among the prisoners. Upon the Board's applying to me, to appoint an officer for that purpose, I have fixed on you as fully answering the description, and I am, therefore to

* The above relates to Baron Steuben's work on military tactics, which was adopted by Congress for the Continental army, and went into universal use with the militia for many years throughout the United States. Colonel Pickering superintended the publication of the first edition, bestowed a good deal of pains to have it brought out accurately, and probably revised and corrected the manuscript for the press.

desire, that you will as speedily is possible after the receipt of this letter, repair to Charlottesville and take the command there. You will immediately make yourself acquainted with the sources of discontent and uneasiness, and exert yourself in applying the most efficacious remedies.

The enclosed copy of a resolve of Congress will show you, that the Governor and Council of Virginia are authorized to superintend the whole.* You are therefore to conduct yourself accordingly, in rendering them an account, or requesting their assistance. Upon the whole, I am persuaded, that from your knowledge of the world, and the acquaintance which you have already made with the troops committed to your care, you are no stranger to the characters with whom you will have principally to deal, and that, while you do credit to the continent, by affording the convention troops no grounds of complaint, you will know how to manage the refractory spirits among them. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 1 March, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I have been a little surprised, that the several important pieces of intelligence lately received from Europe, such parts, I mean, as are circulated without reserve in conversation, have not yet been given to the public, in a manner calculated to attract the attention and impress the minds of the people. As they are now propagated, they run through the country in a variety

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* See *Journals of Congress, February 20th.*

of forms, are confounded in the common mass of general rumors, and lose a great part of their effect. It would certainly be attended with many valuable consequences, if they could be given to the people in some more authentic and pointed manner. It would assist the measures taken to restore our currency, promote the recruiting of the army and our other military arrangements, and give a certain spring to our affairs in general. Congress may have particular reasons for not communicating the intelligence officially, which would certainly be the best mode, if it could be done; but, if it cannot, it were to be wished, that as much as is intended to be commonly known could be published in as striking a way, and with as great an appearance of authority, as may be consistent with propriety.

I have taken the liberty to trouble you with this hint, as sometimes things the most obvious escape attention. If you agree with me in sentiment, you will easily fall upon the most proper mode for answering the purpose. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

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* The President of Congress replied; — "The opinion, that greater advantage results from communicating important events to the people, in an authentic way, than by unauthorized reports, is certainly just, though often neglected. The intelligence alluded to is unfortunately of such a nature, or rather so circumstanced, as to render secrecy necessary. As Congress, with the consent of the minister of France, have directed it to be communicated to you, further remarks will be unnecessary. Dr. Witherspoon, who lately returned to Jersey, promised to do it in a personal conference." — *MS. Letter, March 3d.*

This intelligence related to a project of Congress for attempting to recover Georgia, by sending an army to act in conjunction with Count d'Estaing, who was then in the West Indies. Congress applied to M. Gerard, the French minister, for four frigates out of Count d'Estaing's squadron to operate against the enemy in Georgia and Carolina. M. Gerard answered, that they would weaken Count d'Estaing's armament too much, and moreover would not be sufficient to meet the enemy's forces at the south; and that this would in any case be an extraordinary service, which, by the conditions of the treaty, would demand a compensation from the United States. The committee of Congress,

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Middlebrook, 3 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I was a few days ago honored with yours of the 18th ultimo, inclosing the depositions of several inhabitants and civil officers, respecting ill treatment received from sundry officers of the army, and a refusal in some of them to submit to the civil process. Major Call and Mr. Heath, two of the officers, are at Winchester in Virginia, in winter-quarters, a very considerable distance from hence; but, if you are of opinion, that there is an immediate necessity for their appearance to answer the charges against them, I will order

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who held the conference with M. Gerard, argued from the fourth article of the treaty, that the king was bound to render assistance to the United States, and that the condition of affairs in Georgia rendered this assistance necessary and important. They said the demand for compensation could only have place where one of the allies required assistance from the other for an object of conquest, and never when the proposed expedition had for its end the interests of the alliance; and that in the former case a compensation would be just, but to apply this stipulation to objects of the latter kind, would be to frustrate the purpose of the alliance. They proposed, therefore, to reserve the question of compensation for the decision of the sovereign powers.

M. Gerard replied, that the treaty explained the intentions of the contracting parties with so much precision, that he could not admit its sense to be doubtful; that it was necessary to take all the parts of the treaty together; that the first articles contained the principles, of which the following ones were modifications; that the obligation of mutual assistance certainly existed, and that the king would fulfil it with fidelity, but conformably to what his own situation would admit; that the principle from which they were to set out was, that each party was to carry on the war of its own accord against the common enemy; that his Majesty would fulfil this obligation by employing all his force, and doing all the injury possible to the enemy; that his efforts would be equally useful to the alliance, in whatever part of the world they might be made; that this principle was founded on the distance of places, the impossibility of a concert, the difficulties and delays of a correspondence, the necessity of preventing dissensions between par-

them down. Captain Van Heer and Mr. Skinner are in camp. From the conclusion of your letter, you seem willing to suffer the matter to be compromised by the parties, to prevent further trouble. I rather wish that the several charges may be fully investigated, and that the officers may, if they are found guilty, be dealt with according to law, civil or military, in whichever court they may be tried, or, if innocent, honorably acquitted. I therefore propose, that the parties accusing Van Heer and Skinner should institute civil suits against them, to which I will engage they shall submit; or, if they will leave it to a military determination, I will order a court-martial, which will be the speediest method of bringing it to an issue.

I am every now and then embarrassed by disputes between the officers and inhabitants, which generally originate from the latter coming into camp with liquor, selling it to the soldiers, and, as the officers allege, taking clothing, provisions, or accoutrements in pay. There being no civil redress, that I know of, for a grievance of this nature, the officers undertake to punish those suspected of such practices, sometimes with reason, and probably sometimes without foundation. If there is no law of the State to prevent this kind

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ties, and the impossibility of combining expeditions under these circumstances; that there was no distinction between such an expedition as they proposed, and one that should have conquest for its object. M. Gerard added, that the proposition of Congress tended to *interpret* the treaty, that he had no authority to accord to any definite interpretation, or rather to fix an interpretation, and that the only thing that could admit of a reference was, to determine what the compensation ought to be, and not when it could be demanded. Count d'Estaing came to America with orders to act under the requisitions of Congress, while he was in the American seas. He had now left those seas, and was promoting the general objects of the alliance by carrying on the war separately. He could be called back by Congress only with the assurance of a compensation. — *MS. Letter from M. Gerard to Count de Vergennes, February 12th.*

of commerce between the people and the soldiery, it would have a very good effect to procure one, prohibiting an inhabitant from selling liquor to the soldiers, within the limits of the camp, without leave obtained from the commanding officer of the quarter into which it may be brought, and imposing a penalty, recoverable by a summary process before a magistrate, upon any person receiving arms, accoutrements, clothing, or provisions from a soldier by way of purchase, or in exchange for any commodity brought into camp for sale.

An act of this kind would relieve the considerate officer from the disagreeable necessity, in which he is often involved, of submitting to a grievance destructive of every military principle, or undertaking to punish a citizen by virtue of his own authority; and it will point out a mode of redress to others, too willing perhaps to exercise military power, when they have an opportunity or excuse for so doing. I congratulate you on your late escape at Elizabethtown, and I am very sincerely, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 3 March, 1779.

SIR,

A plan of offensive operations for the effectual relief of the western frontier has been some time since de-

* A party of British troops landed near Elizabethtown, on the 28th of February, and succeeded in reaching the house of Governor Livingston. Fortunately he had left home several hours before, and was at the house of a friend a few miles distant, although his family were at home. The British officer seized some of the Governor's papers and carried them off, but no acts of violence were committed. A few of the houses were burned in the village. See the particulars in Sedgwick's *Life of William Livingston*, p. 322.

termined upon, and preparations are making in consequence. I endeavour to observe as much secrecy as possible. In the late proceedings of the committee of arrangement, respecting the sixteen battalions, it has been determined to incorporate Malcom's and Spencer's regiments into one, and Webb's and Sherburne's into another. It is left undecided who shall be the Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel in the first, and who the Colonel in the last. By the resolve of Congress of the 4th of February, directing the Commander-in-chief to complete the arrangement of the army, the decision of this matter devolves upon him. In giving this general direction, I am persuaded the particular case of these officers did not occur to the attention of Congress; otherwise they would have been sensible of the delicacy of my undertaking to decide in an affair of this kind, especially where officers of such character and rank are concerned.

I shall be happy if Congress think proper to take the matter into their consideration, and will favor me with the result as speedily as possible. The officers interested are very anxious to know their fate, and the service will suffer from delay.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

Head-Quarters, 4 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The President of Congress has transmitted to me your Excellency's letter to the delegates of New York, representing the calamitous situation of the northwestern frontier of that State, accompanied by a similar application from the Pennsylvania Assembly, and a re-

solve of the 25th, directing me to take the most effectual measures for the protection of the inhabitants and chastisement of the Indians. The resolve has been in some measure anticipated by my previous dispositions for carrying on offensive operations against the hostile tribes of savages. It has always been my intention early to communicate this matter to your Excellency in confidence, and I take occasion, from the letter abovementioned, to inform you that preparations have some time since been making, and they will be conducted to the point of execution at a proper season, if no unexpected accident prevents, and the situation of affairs on the maritime frontier justifies the undertaking.

The greatest secrecy is necessary to the success of such an enterprise, for the following obvious reasons; that, immediately upon the discovery of our design, the savages would either put themselves in condition to make head against us, by a reunion of all their force and that of their allies, strengthened besides by succours from Canada, or elude the expedition altogether, which might be done at the expense of a temporary evacuation of forests, which we could not possess, and the destruction of a few settlements, which they might speedily reëstablish. I begin to apprehend this matter is less under the veil of secrecy than was originally intended; but your Excellency will see the propriety of using every precaution to prevent its being divulged, and of covering such preparations as might announce it with the most specious disguise.

With respect to the force to be employed on this occasion, it is scarce necessary to observe, that the detaching of a considerable number of Continental troops on such a remote expedition would too much expose the country adjacent to the enemy's main body.

There must therefore be efficacious assistance derived from the States, whose frontiers are obnoxious to the inroads of the barbarians; and for this I intended at a proper time to make application. Your Excellency will be pleased to acquaint me what force yours in particular can furnish, what proportion can be drawn from the inhabitants, who have been driven from the frontier, and what previous measures can be taken to engage them without giving an alarm. This class of people, besides the advantages of a knowledge of the country, and the particular motives with which they are animated, are most likely to furnish the troops best calculated for the service, which should be corps of active rangers, who are at the same time expert marksmen, and accustomed to the irregular kind of wood fighting practised by the Indians. Men of this description, embodied under proper officers, would be infinitely preferable to a superior number of militia unacquainted with this species of war, and who would exhaust the magazines of ammunition and provisions without rendering any effectual service. It will be a very necessary attention to avoid the danger of short enlistments. The service should be limited only by the expedition, or a term amply competent to it; otherwise we may be exposed to having their engagements expire at some interesting or perhaps critical juncture. I have only to add, that I shall be happy to have the advantage of any sentiments or advice your Excellency may be pleased to communicate relative to the expedition. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* Such wanton ravages and murders had been committed on the frontiers by the Indians the preceding year, particularly at Wyoming and Cherry Valley, that it was thought necessary to fit out a formidable expedition against them, by which at least their villages, provisions, and crops should be destroyed, and they should be prevented from repeating their incursions. General Washington took very great pains to ob-

TO DON DIEGO JOSEPH NAVARRO, GOVERNOR OF HAVANA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 4 March, 1779.

SIR,

A journey to Philadelphia in the winter procured me the honor of your Excellency's favor of the 11th of March last, by Don Juan Miralles, and the pleasure of that gentleman's acquaintance. His estimable qualities justify your recommendation, and concur with it to establish him in my esteem. I doubt not he will have informed you of the cordial and respectful sentiments, which he has experienced in this country. On my part, I shall always take pleasure in convincing him of the high value I set upon his merit, and of the respect I bear to those, who are so happy as

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tain intelligence of the Indian country, the villages, roads, distances, and the means of transporting an army. Two general plans were considered. The first was to proceed up the Mohawk River, and thence to the Seneca country, and perhaps to Niagara. General Schuyler advised this route, and drew up an able paper pointing out its advantages, and the military arrangements by which it might be effected. It was an objection to this route, that it would take the army too near Lake Ontario, where the enemy could operate with effect from Canada, and also that the transportation of supplies would be very expensive, and rendered uncertain by the distance.

After mature consideration, and an enlarged inquiry, General Washington decided, that a southern route by the way of the Susquehanna River, for the main body of the forces, would be preferable. He determined, therefore, that three thousand men should rendezvous at Wyoming, and penetrate immediately to the Seneca country up the west branch of the Susquehanna; that another body of about one thousand men, composed chiefly of New York regiments, should move from the Mohawk River and form a junction with the main body while on their march; and that five hundred more should come from Pittsburg by the way of the Allegany River, and coöperate as circumstances might permit. When united, they were to attack the Indians, should they attempt to defend their country; and, if not, they were to burn and destroy the Indian towns and lay waste their fields. The idea of a coöperation from Pittsburg was abandoned, before the expedition went into effect.

to interest your Excellency's friendship. I can only express my gratitude for your polite offer of service, by entreating you to afford me opportunities of testifying my readiness to execute any commands with which you shall please to honor me. With my prayers for your health and happiness, and with the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Middlebrook, 6 March, 1779.

SIR,

By the enclosed copy of a resolution of the 25th of February last, you will perceive it is the desire of Congress, that some offensive expedition should be carried on against the Indians the ensuing campaign. With an eye to a measure of this kind, I have some time since directed preparations to be made at such places, as appeared to me most proper for the purpose; to be completed by the first day of May next, at which time it is my intention, that the operation shall begin. The objects of this expedition will be ef-

* Don Juan Miralles was recommended by the Governor of Havana as a gentleman of fortune, who resided in that city, but who, while on a voyage to Spain, had been compelled by some accident, that happened to the ship in which he was embarked, to enter the harbour of Charleston, in South Carolina. The Governor wrote, also, that Don Juan Miralles, being dispirited by his misfortunes at sea, had resolved to remain in the United States, till he should find a safe opportunity to return to Spain, and requested in his behalf the civilities and protection of General Washington. The truth is, however, that Miralles was an unofficial agent of the Spanish government, and was introduced in this way, that he might obtain a knowledge of the affairs of the United States, and communicate it to the ministers of the Spanish court. Spain was not yet ready to take an open and decided part; nor indeed was she ever ready to regard the American people as an independent nation, till circumstances made it an imperious necessity.

fectually to chastise and intimidate the hostile nations, to countenance and encourage the friendly ones, and to relieve our frontiers from the depredations to which they would otherwise be exposed. To effect these purposes, it is proposed to carry the war into the heart of the country of the Six Nations, to cut off their settlements, destroy their next year's crops, and do them every other mischief, which time and circumstances will permit.

From the best information I have been able hitherto to collect, the whole number of warriors of the Six Nations, including the Tories who have joined them, will amount to about three thousand. To these must be added the aid they may derive from Canada, and from the British garrisons on the frontiers. The force we shall have it in our power to employ on the expedition will be about four thousand Continental troops, I mean rank and file fit for service, besides such aids of militia as may be deemed absolutely necessary. These, however, will not be large, as Congress are endeavouring to pursue a plan of strict economy, and to avoid calling out the militia, which is attended with great loss and expense. To obviate the necessity of it, I have strained the supply of Continental troops to the utmost extent, which a comparison of our collective force and that of the enemy will possibly permit. Three thousand of the abovementioned number will compose the main body; the remainder will be employed in different quarters to harass and distract the enemy, and create diversions in favor of the principal operation. It would be improper to hazard upon paper a more minute detail of the plan.

I am now to express my wish, that it may be agreeable to you to undertake the command of this expedition; in which case you will be pleased to repair to

head-quarters without delay, to make the necessary previous arrangements and enter upon the business. The season is so far advanced, that not a moment's time is to be lost. But, as I am uncertain whether your health or other considerations will permit you to accept a command of this nature, and as the advanced state of the season already mentioned will not allow me to wait for an answer, I have enclosed a letter for General Sullivan, on whom, if you decline, it is my intention the command shall devolve. Should you accept, you will retain the letter and return it to me; if not, you will immediately transmit it to him. Whether you accept or not, you will be sensible of the necessity of secrecy. The less our design is known or suspected by the enemy, the more easy and certain will be its execution. It will also be of importance to its success to endeavour to prevent succours coming from Canada. This will be best effected by hanging out false appearances to deceive the enemy there, and beget jealousies for their own security. Among other expedients for this end, one may be, to make inquiry with an air of mystery, and yet in such a way as will spread the idea, what force of militia could be derived from the State of Massachusetts towards an invasion of Canada, by the way of Coos, in case of the appearance of a French fleet and army in the river St. Lawrence. You will employ this and any other artifices that may occur to you for the purpose. In the event of General Sullivan's leaving Providence, you will take the immediate command of the troops now under him. I am, &c.*

* General Gates replied;—"Last night I had the honor of your Excellency's letter. The man, who undertakes the Indian service, should enjoy youth and strength; requisites I do not possess. It therefore grieves me, that your Excellency should offer me the only command, to which I am entirely unequal. In obedience to your command, I have forwarded your letter to General Sullivan, and, that he may not be one

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

Camp at Middlebrook, 8 March, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I am mortified exceedingly, that my letter from Philadelphia, with the several enclosures, did not reach Boston before your departure from that port. It was written as soon as Congress had come to a decision upon the several matters, which became the subject of the President's letter to you, and was committed for conveyance to the messenger, who was charged with his despatches to that place.

Monsieur La Colombe did me the honor of delivering to me your favors, and will probably be the bearer of my thanks for the affectionate manner in which you have expressed your sentiments in your last adieu, than which nothing can be more flattering and pleasing; nor is there any thing more wished for by me, than opportunities of giving substantial proofs of the sincerity of my attachment and affection.*

Nothing of importance has happened since you left

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moment detained, I have desired him to leave the command with General Glover, until I arrive in Providence, which will be in a few days. You may be assured of my inviolable secrecy, and that your other directions shall be fulfilled." — *Boston, March 16th.*

General Sullivan accepted the appointment, and repaired to headquarters.

* The Marquis de Lafayette had written from Boston on board the Alliance, January 11th; — "The sails are just going to be hoisted, my dear General, and I have only time to take my last leave of you. I may now be certain, that Congress do not intend to send any thing more by me. Farewell, my dear General. I hope your French friends will ever be dear to you. I hope I shall soon see you again, and tell you myself with what emotions I now leave the land you inhabit, and with what affection and respect I shall ever be your sincere friend."

By some unknown cause of delay, the last despatches of the President of Congress and General Washington did not reach the Marquis before he sailed, so that he went to France without being informed of the final decision of Congress respecting the Canada expedition.

us, except the enemy's invasion of Georgia, and possession of its capital; which, though it may add something to their supplies on the score of provisions, will contribute very little to the brilliancy of their arms. For, like the defenceless island of St. Lucia, it only required the appearance of force to effect the conquest of it, as the whole militia of the State did not exceed twelve hundred men, and many of them disaffected. General Lincoln is assembling a force to dispossess them, and my only fear is, that he will precipitate the attempt before he is fully prepared for the execution In New York and at Rhode Island, the enemy continued quiet till the 25th ultimo, when an attempt was made by them to surprise the post at Elizabethtown; but failing therein, and finding themselves closely pressed, and in danger from detachments advancing towards them from this army, they retreated precipitately through a marsh waist-deep in mud, after abandoning all their plunder; but not before they had, according to their wonted custom, set fire to two or three houses. The regiment of Anspach, and some other troops, are brought from Rhode Island to New York.

We are happy in the repeated assurances and proofs of the friendship of our great and good ally, whom we hope and trust, ere this, may be congratulated on the birth of a prince, and on the joy which the nation must derive from an instance of royal felicity. We also flatter ourselves, that before this period the Kings of Spain and the Two Sicilies may be greeted as allies of the United States; and we are not a little pleased to find, from good authority, that the solicitations and offers of the court of Great Britain to the Empress of Russia have been rejected; nor are we to be displeased, that overtures from the city of Amsterdam, for entering into a commercial connexion with us, have

been made in such open and pointed terms. Such favorable sentiments, in so many powerful Princes and States, cannot but be considered in a very honorable, interesting, and pleasing point of view, by all those who have struggled with difficulties and misfortunes to maintain the rights and secure the liberties of their country. But, notwithstanding these flattering appearances, the British King and his ministers continue to threaten us with war and desolation. A few months, however, must decide whether these or peace is to take place. For both we will prepare; and, should the former be continued, I shall not despair of sharing fresh toils and dangers with you in America; but, if the latter succeeds, I can entertain little hopes, that the rural amusements of an infant world, or the contracted stage of an American theatre, can withdraw your attention and services from the gayeties of a court, and the active part you will more than probably be called upon to share in the administration of your government. The soldier will then be transformed into the statesman, and your employment in this new walk of life will afford you no time to revisit this continent, or think of friends who lament your absence.

The American troops are again in huts; but in a more agreeable and fertile country, than they were in last winter at Valley Forge; and they are better clad and more healthy, than they have ever been since the formation of the army. Mrs. Washington is now with me, and makes a cordial tender of her regards to you; and, if those of strangers can be offered with propriety, and will be acceptable, we respectively wish to have them conveyed to your amiable lady. We hope and trust, that your passage has been short, agreeable, and safe, and that you are as happy, as the smiles of a gracious Prince, beloved wife, warm friends, and high expecta-

tions can make you. I have now complied with your request in writing you a long letter; and I shall only add, that, with the purest sentiments of attachment, and the warmest friendship and regard, I am, my dear Marquis, your most affectionate and obliged, &c.*

TO BARON STEUBEN.

Head-Quarters, 11 March, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your favor of the 5th, and now return you the sequel of your work, accompanied by a few notes. It gives me great pleasure to learn, that the first part is in such forwardness for the press. With respect to the title, I think "Regulations for the Infantry of the United States" will be sufficient. In a letter to Congress I have signified my approbation of the work. It remains for them to give it a final sanction,

* The frigate Alliance, in which Lafayette sailed, was commanded by Captain Landais. There was a difficulty in procuring sailors at Boston to man the vessel. It was ascertained that several of the soldiers, who had deserted from Burgoyne's army while at Cambridge, were willing to enlist, and the complement of the crew was made up with these men. Being in the midst of winter, the voyage was tempestuous and long. In a storm on the Banks of Newfoundland, the vessel's topmast was carried away, she sprang a leak and was otherwise much damaged. About two hundred leagues from the coast of Ireland a conspiracy was formed by the English and Irish sailors on board. It was their plan to kill the officers, seize the ship, and proceed with it to a port in Ireland, where they would be entitled to receive its value from the government.

At the concerted moment, when every man should be at his post, some one was to cry out "*A sail,*" which would naturally bring the officers on deck. As they ascended from the cabin, the guns on the forecastle, loaded with grape-shot, were to be discharged at them. If any of the officers escaped, they were to be instantly seized and thrown into the sea, except Lafayette, who was to be retained, with the view of exchanging him for General Burgoyne. Such was the plot of the conspirators. There being no person among them, who could navigate the vessel, they had revealed their schemes to an American sailor, who had resided long in Ireland, and was acquainted with its seas and harbours.

and preface it with such order as they may judge proper. As the fine season is advancing, you will, I flatter myself, shortly have the satisfaction, so rarely enjoyed by authors, of seeing your precepts reduced to practice; and I hope your success will be equal to the merit of your work. I am with great respect, &c.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 14 March, 1779.

SIR,

It is much to be regretted, that all the attempts, which have been made to establish some general and adequate rule for the exchange of prisoners, have hitherto been ineffectual. In a matter of so great importance, too much pains cannot be taken to surmount the obstacles that lie in its way, and to bring it to a satisfactory issue. With an earnest desire to effect this, the honorable Congress have again authorized me to propose the settlement of a general cartel, and to

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Deceived by his Irish accent, they took him for an Irishman, and proposed that he should command the ship and conduct it to Ireland. He apparently acceded to the proposal. The time of the assault was first fixed at four o'clock in the morning, but it was afterwards altered to four in the afternoon. Meantime the American sailor gave notice of the plot to the lieutenant, with the names of the principal leaders. The lieutenant went into the cabin, made it known to Lafayette and the captain, and told them that it was to be executed in two hours. After a brief deliberation, Lafayette and the officers armed themselves, sent for the leaders one by one in a quiet manner, and had them separately put in irons, and confined in the hold of the vessel, to the number of twenty-three. The sailors were then all called on deck, and told that their plot was discovered, that the leaders were in irons, that it was presumed they had been seduced into this criminal combination by the influence of those persons, and that confidence was reposed in the others. From this time a strong guard was constantly kept on deck, the officers went armed, and the Alliance arrived safely at Brest eight days afterwards. The American and French sailors had taken no part in the conspiracy, and probably were not consulted.

appoint commissioners with full powers for that purpose. This proposition, in obedience to their order, I now make; and if it should meet with your concurrence, I shall be ready to send commissioners to meet others on your part, at such time and place as shall be judged convenient.

That the present attempt may not prove as unsuccessful as former ones, it is to be hoped, if there is a meeting of commissioners, that the gentlemen on both sides, apprized of the difficulties which have occurred, and with a liberal attention to the circumstances of the parties, will come disposed to accommodate their negotiations to them, and to level all unnecessary obstructions to the completion of the treaty. I have the honor to be with due respect, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 15 March, 1779.

SIR,

I have waited with anxious expectations for some plan to be adopted by Congress, which would have a general operation throughout the States for completing their respective battalions. No plan for this purpose has yet come to my knowledge, nor do I find that the

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* By a recent resolve, Congress had invested General Washington with full power to negotiate at his discretion a cartel of exchange, comprehending the convention troops and prisoners of every other description, to fix and conclude the terms of exchange, and to appoint commissioners for the purpose. In the same resolve it was also declared, that the acts and stipulations of the commissioners of the two parties, when ratified and confirmed by the respective Commanders-in-chief, should be final and conclusive. — *Journals, March 5th.* Hitherto Congress had been accustomed to prescribe certain conditions, which in some measure embarrassed the negotiations. See General Clinton's answer to the above letter in the APPENDIX, No. II.

several governments are pursuing any measures to accomplish the end by particular arrangements of their own legislatures. I therefore hope Congress will excuse any appearance of importunity in my troubling them again on the subject, as I earnestly wish to be enabled to realize some ideas on what may be expected towards the completion of our battalions by the opening of the next campaign. They are already greatly reduced, and will be much more so by that time, owing to the expiration of the term of service of the last year's drafts.

At the posts in the Highlands, Nixon's, Paterson's, and Learned's brigades alone will, by the 1st of April, suffer a diminution of eight hundred and forty-seven men, who must be replaced, reluctantly as they will be spared from the other posts. The committee, with whom I had the honor to confer, were of opinion, that the regiments now in service should be continued and completed. This was confirmed by the resolve of Congress of the 23d of January last, which also directed some additional encouragements for recruiting the army during the war. Aware that this expedient, though a very useful one, could not be altogether relied on, especially if the interference of State bounties were still permitted, I furnished the committee with my ideas of the mode, which afforded the most certain prospect of success. I shall not trouble Congress with a repetition of these, as I doubt not they have been fully reported by the committee. Among the troops of some States, recruiting in camp on the new bounties has succeeded tolerably well; among others, where the expectations of State bounties have had more influence, very ill;*

* By the resolution of the 23d of January, Congress had authorized the Commander-in-chief to offer a bounty of two hundred dollars for every soldier, who should enlist to serve during the war, in addition to the usual

upon the whole, the success has been far short of our wishes, and will probably be so of our necessities.

I have not yet made any attempt to recruit in the country, for reasons which will be communicated by the committee; added to which, I have received information from Colonel Rawlings, who has been authorized by Congress to recruit the three companies still remaining of his battalion to their complement, that he could make no progress in the business, on account of the inferiority of the Continental bounty to that of Virginia. The measure of enlisting in the country, in my opinion, depends so much on the abolishing of State bounties, that without it I am doubtful whether it will be worth

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bounties of land and clothing. Enlistments had begun in camp on this principle among the troops, whose term of service was to expire in the month of June following. The mode of enlistment was afterwards modified in such a manner, as to obviate the difficulties mentioned above. It was referred to the respective States to fill up their quotas in such a mode, as they should think proper, and a bounty of two hundred dollars was granted from the Continental treasury for each recruit that should enlist for the war; and in case a State should grant a greater bounty, the amount of two hundred dollars was to be put to the credit of the State for every new recruit.

The infantry of the Continental army for the next campaign was arranged in eighty battalions, of which were apportioned to New Hampshire three, Massachusetts fifteen, Rhode Island two, Connecticut eight, New York five, New Jersey three, Pennsylvania eleven, Delaware one, Maryland eight, Virginia eleven, North Carolina six, South Carolina six, Georgia one. — *Journals, March 9th.* Hence, nearly one-fifth of the whole army was from Massachusetts; and the number apportioned to that State was about one-third larger than from any other. The ratio of the numbers actually in service was still greater.

Congress likewise determined, that the officers and soldiers of the Continental artillery and cavalry should be credited to the States to which they belonged when commissioned or enlisted, and be considered as making a part of their respective quotas. — *Journals, March 15th.* Hitherto the artillery and cavalry had been under the exclusive direction of Congress, and the men had been enlisted without reference to the State apportionments. By General Knox's return of the artillery on the 5th of April, there were in the army forty-nine companies, containing in the whole sixteen hundred and seven men. When completed to their full numbers, there would be two thousand six hundred and forty-six.

the experiment. State bounties have been a source of immense expense and many misfortunes. The sooner the practice can be abolished, and system introduced in our manner of recruiting and keeping up our battalions, as well as in the administration of the several departments of the army, the sooner will our security be established and placed out of the reach of contingencies. Temporary expedients, to serve the purposes of the moment, occasion more difficulties and expense than can easily be conceived.*

* The new bounty offered by Congress did not have the effect to abolish nor even to diminish State bounties. An act of the legislature of New Jersey, for completing the three battalions of the State, allowed two hundred and fifty dollars for each new recruit, in addition to the bounty of clothing, land, and two hundred dollars, given by Congress.— Wilson's *Laws of New Jersey*, p. 84. The legislature of Virginia, by an act passed on the 3d of May, offered a bounty of *seven hundred and fifty dollars* for every soldier that should enlist to serve through the war, and also a suit of clothes once a year, and one hundred acres of unappropriated land within the State. The bounty and clothing given by Congress were to be deducted from the above amount, and reserved by the State. Provision was also made for pensions to those, who should be disabled in the service, or relief to their families in case of death before their term of enlistment should expire. — Hening's *Statutes at Large*, Vol. X. p. 23.

In writing to the Board of War, General Washington said, "The enormous bounties given by the States, towns, and by individuals, to men for very short temporary services, are the source of the present discontents, and of a thousand evils among the soldiers; and, as long as they continue to be given, so long will they excite dissatisfaction. They induce the soldier, who has undergone a long service, and who engaged for the war in the first instance on a very moderate bounty, to reason upon his situation, and to draw a comparison between what he receives and the great emoluments others get, and put him upon inventing means from which he will be able to derive the same advantage. And from this comparison and these considerations it is, I am convinced, that most of our desertions proceed, especially where the men do not go to the enemy. In consideration of the services of the soldiers, who engaged at an early period to serve during the war, and the great disproportion between the bounties they received, and those given to others for the service of a few months, or perhaps not more than a year at most, I have sometimes thought it might not be improper to give them, by way of gratuity and

The superior information, which Congress may have of the political state of affairs in Europe, may induce them to believe, that there will soon be a termination of the war; and therefore that the expense of vigorous measures to reinforce the army may be avoided. If this should be the case, I dare say the reasons will be well considered before a plan is adopted, which, whatever advantages of economy it may promise, in an eventual disappointment may be productive of very ruinous consequences. For my own part, I confess I should be cautious of admitting the supposition, that the war will terminate without another desperate effort on the part of the enemy. The speech of the Prince, and the debates of his ministers, have very little of the aspect of peace; and if we reflect, that they are subsequent, as I apprehend they must have been, to the events, on which our hopes appear to be founded, they must seem no bad arguments of a determination in the British cabinet to continue the war. Whether this be the determination or not, it is a very natural policy, it is true, that every exertion should be made by them to be in the best condition to oppose their enemies, and that there should be every appearance of vigor and preparation. But if the ministry had serious thoughts of making peace, they would hardly insist so much as they do on the particular point of prosecuting the American war. They would not like to raise and inflame the expectations of the people on this subject, while it was secretly their intention to disappoint them. In America, every thing has the complexion of a con-

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as an acknowledgment, one hundred dollars, which, besides operating as a reward, might have a good effect and quiet their discontent."— *June 9th.*

Congress took this hint, and voted a gratuity of one hundred dollars to each soldier, who had enlisted for the war previously to the 23d of January. — *Journals, June 22d.*

tinuance of the war. The operations of the enemy in the Southern States do not resemble a transient incursion, but a serious conquest. At their posts in this quarter, every thing is in a state of tranquillity, and indicates a design at least to hold possession. These considerations joined to the preceding, the infinite pains that are taken to keep up the spirits of the disaffected and assure them of support and protection, and several other circumstances, trifling in themselves but powerful when combined, amount to no contemptible evidence, that the contest is not so near its end as we could wish. I am fully sensible of many weighty reasons on the opposite side; but I do not think them sufficiently conclusive to destroy the force of what has been suggested, or to justify the sanguine inferences many seem inclined to draw.

Should the court of Britain be able to send any reinforcements to America the next campaign, and carry on offensive operations, and should we not take some effectual means to recruit our battalions, when we shall have detached the force necessary to act decisively against the Indians, and the remaining drafts shall have returned home, the force which remains for our defence will be very inconsiderable indeed. We must then, on every exigency, have recourse to the militia, the consequence of which, besides weakness and defeat in the field, will be double or treble the necessary expense to the public. To say nothing of the injury to agriculture, which attends calling out the militia on particular emergencies, and at some critical seasons, they are commonly twice as long in coming to the place where they are wanted and returning home, as they are in the field, and must of course for every day's real service receive two or three days' pay, and consume the same proportion of provisions.

When an important matter is suspended for deliberation in Congress, I should be sorry that my solicitude to have it determined should contribute to a premature decision. But, when I have such striking proofs of public loss and private discontent, from the present management of the clothing department; when accounts inadmissible, if any system existed, frequently remind me of the absolute necessity of introducing one; when I hear, as I often do, of large importations of clothing, which we never see, of quantities wasting and rotting in different parts of the country, the knowledge of which reaches me by chance; when I have reason to believe, that money, which has been expended for clothing the army, if judiciously laid out and the clothes regularly issued, would have effectually answered the purpose, and when I have never, till now, seen the troops otherwise than half naked; when I feel the perplexity and additional load of business thrown upon me, by the irregularity in this department, and the applications from all parts of the army for relief; I cannot forbear discovering my anxiety to have some plan decided for conducting the business hereafter in a more provident and consistent manner. If the one proposed to the committee does not coincide with the sentiments of Congress, I should be happy if some other could be substituted. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN RUTLEDGE, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Middlebrook, 15 March, 1779.

SIR,

Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens, who will have the honor of delivering you this, has served two campaigns in

my family in quality of aid-de-camp. The whole tenor of his conduct has been such, as to entitle him to my particular friendship, and to give me a high opinion of his talents and merit. In the field, he has given very distinguishing proofs of his bravery upon several interesting occasions. His military zeal and a concern for his own country * have determined him to leave this for a time, to offer his services where he thinks they will be more essential. Though unwilling to part with him, I could not oppose his going to a place where he is called by such powerful motives, and where I am persuaded he will be extremely useful. I have, therefore, given him leave of absence till a change of affairs will permit his return, when I shall be happy to see him resume his place in my family. Though I imagine he is personally acquainted with your Excellency, I could not suffer him to depart, without informing you of the great value I set upon him, and recommending him warmly to your attention. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THOMAS NELSON, IN CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 15 March, 1779.

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your friendly letter of the 9th, and for your obliging though unsuccessful endeavours to procure the horses I am indebted to my country for. At present I have no immediate call for them, as we find it rather difficult to support the few we keep at camp in forage.†

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* South Carolina.

† The Assembly of Virginia had voted, that four horses should be purchased and sent to General Washington as a present from the State. General Nelson had been requested by the Assembly to procure the horses, and send them forward.

It gives me very singular pleasure to find, that you have again taken a seat in Congress. I think there never was a time, when cool and dispassionate reasoning, strict attention and application, great integrity, and, if it was in the nature of things, unerring wisdom, were more to be wished for, than at the present. Our affairs, according to my judgment, are now come to a crisis, and require no small degree of political skill to steer clear of those shelves and rocks, which, though deeply buried, may wreck our hopes and throw us upon some inhospitable shore. Unanimity in our councils, disinterestedness in our pursuits, and steady perseverance in our national duty, are the only means to avoid misfortunes. If they come upon us after these, we shall have the consolation of knowing that we have done our best. The rest is with God. Shall I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you at camp, when the weather gets a little settled? I can assure you it would be a gratification of my wishes. Mrs. Washington salutes you most cordially, and offers her thanks for the letter you were kind enough to send her.

I am, &c.

TO HENRY LAURENS, IN CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 20 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you, and I do it very sincerely, for your obliging favors, and for their several enclosures, containing articles of intelligence. I congratulate you on Campbell's precipitate retreat from Fort Augusta. What was this owing to? It seems to have been a surprise even upon Williamson. But I rejoice much more on account of his disappointed application to the

Creek Indians. This, I think, is to be considered a very important event; and may it not be conjectured as the cause of Campbell's hasty return? This latter circumstance cannot but be a fresh proof to the disaffected in that country, that they are leaning upon a broken reed. Severe examples should, in my judgment, be made of those, who were forgiven former offences and are again in arms against us.

The policy of our arming slaves is in my opinion a moot point, unless the enemy set the example.* For, should we begin to form battalions of them, I have not the smallest doubt, if the war is to be prosecuted, of their following us in it, and justifying the measure upon our own ground. The contest then must be, who can arm fastest. And where are our arms? Besides, I am not clear that a discrimination will not render slavery more irksome to those who remain in it. Most of the good and evil things in this life are judged of by comparison; and I fear a comparison in this case will be productive of much discontent in those, who are held in servitude. But, as this is a subject that has never employed much of my thoughts, these are no more than the first crude ideas that have struck me upon the occasion.

I had not the smallest intimation of Monsieur Gerard's passing through Jersey,† till I was favored with

* Mr. Laurens had written; "Our affairs in the southern department are more favorable, than we had considered them a few days ago; nevertheless, the country is greatly distressed, and will be more so, unless further reinforcements are sent to its relief. Had we arms for three thousand such black men, as I could select in Carolina, I should have no doubt of success in driving the British out of Georgia, and subduing East Florida, before the end of July."—*March 16th.*

† On this topic Mr. Laurens had said;—"Monsieur Gerard intends a journey through New Jersey in a few days. Where he is going, is a subject not to be talked of at present, and yet it is two to one, Sir, that you have heard it."

your letter, and I am now ignorant of the cause, otherwise than by conjecture. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to you, and, with every sentiment of regard and attachment, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD, AT FORT PITT.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 22 March, 1779.

SIR,

I have directed Colonel Rawlings, with his corps consisting of three companies, to march from Fort Frederic, in Maryland, where he is guarding the British prisoners, to Fort Pitt, as soon as he is relieved by a guard of militia. Upon his arrival you are to detach him with his own corps and as many as will make up one hundred, should his companies be short of that number, to take post at Kittaning, and immediately throw up a stockade fort for the security of convoys. When this is accomplished, a small garrison is to be left there, and the remainder are to proceed to Venango, and establish another post of the same kind for the same purpose. The party is to go provided with proper tools from Fort Pitt, and Colonel Rawlings is to be directed to make choice of good pieces of ground, and by all means to use every precaution against a surprise at either post.

Colonel Gibson is to be ordered to hold himself ready to join you with his force, when matters are ripe for execution. But he is to keep his intended removal from Tuscarora a profound secret; and, when he receives his orders to march, let it be as sudden as possible. Hasten the water-craft by all means, that you may not have to wait for them, when other matters are ready. Neither the Indians nor any other per-

sons are to know your destination, until your movements point out the probable quarter. Engage at a proper season as many warriors as you can to accompany you, and at all events procure good guides, who know the way from the head of the navigation of the Allegany to the nearest Indian towns and to Niagara. After you have moved, let it remain a secret, as long as possible, to which place you are going. You are to inform me with precision, and by a careful express, when you will be ready to begin your movement from Fort Pitt, when you can be at Kittaning, when at Venango, when at the head of the navigation, how far it is from thence to the nearest Indian towns, and when you can reach them. In making your estimate of the times, you are to calculate upon moving as light as possible, and with only a few pieces of the lighest artillery. These things it is necessary for me to know, with as much accuracy as possible, that the plan of coöperation, upon which much depends, may be perfectly formed.

I would wish you to pacify and cultivate the friendship of the western Indians, by all the means in your power. When you are ready to move, and your probable destination can be no longer concealed, contrive ways to inform them, that you are going to meet a large force, to fall upon and destroy the whole country of the Six Nations; and that, if they do in the mean time give the least disturbance to the frontiers, the whole force will be turned against them; and that we will never rest, till we have cut them off from the face of the earth. There is one point upon which I will take the liberty of dropping you a caution, though perhaps it may already have struck you; which is, the policy and propriety of not interesting yourself in the dispute subsisting between the States of Pennsylvania and Vir-

ginia, on account of their boundaries. I would wish you to recommend unanimity for the present to all parties; and, if they endeavour to make you an umpire in their affairs, I would have you wave it, as not coming properly before you in your military capacity. This impartial line of conduct will command the respect of both parties, whereas a contrary one would constantly produce discontent and ill-will in those disappointed by the decision. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 26 March, 1779.

SIR,

When I had the honor of addressing your Excellency, I transmitted some intelligence I had just received from General Maxwell, respecting Admiral Gambier's preparing to sail from New York, and suggesting New London to be the object of the expedition. How far events may justify this suggestion, I cannot determine; however, by advices which came to hand this evening from a correspondent, from whom I have my best intelligence, I am informed, that sixteen transports with a flat-boat each, a sloop-of-war of sixteen guns, and five or six strong privateers, went up the Sound a few days ago with a view of joining the Scorpion and Thames of twenty guns. The advices also say, that the Admiral in a sixty-four, with a sloop-of-war, sailed from the Hook about the same time, with a pilot acquainted with Long Island and the Sound, that the supposed design of the expedition is to take the frigates at New London, and that their determination now is to plunder and distress the coast.*

* This conjecture was well founded. Instructions to this effect had been sent to Sir Henry Clinton. "The keeping the coasts of the ene-

There are accounts, besides these, that troops have been drawing towards the east end of the Island, and some flat-boats building under the direction of Sir William Erskine. It is added, that General Clinton is gone there himself. General Putnam is apprized of these movements, but it will be impossible for us to prevent their descent in many instances. I transmit to your Excellency three New York papers, and have the honor to be, with the greatest respect and esteem, your Excellency's most obedient, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Middlebrook, 28 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The enemy have some enterprise in view. New London, on account of the frigates in the river, and because boats have been preparing at the east end of Long Island, and troops for some time past drawing thitherward, is supposed to be the object. Probably it is so; but, as the season is now approaching when either negotiation or vigorous exertions must take the place of inactivity, and as General Clinton doubtless

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my constantly alarmed," said Lord George Germain, in a letter to him, "the destroying of their ships and magazines, and by that means preventing the rebels becoming a formidable maritime power and obstructing the commerce of his Majesty's subjects, are objects of so much importance, that a war of this sort, carried on with spirit and humanity, would probably induce the rebellious provinces to return to their allegiance; at least, it would prevent their sending out that swarm of privateers, the success of which has enabled and encouraged the rebels to persevere in their revolt."—*November 4th*, 1778. Plausible as this scheme might appear, the effect was contrary to the anticipation of the minister. Destroying private property and injuring individuals, by unprovoked attacks with fire and sword, tended to rouse the indignation of the people, and combine them more heartily in sustaining the war.

will, in the latter case, and in pursuance of the predatory plan talked of by the minority and not disavowed by the administration, attempt something that will give eclat to his arms, I should not be much surprised if some vigorous effort was used against Annapolis, Baltimore, or even Philadelphia itself. I do not mean with a view to hold either of these places, but to plunder or destroy them. General Clinton, under pretence of visiting the troops, is now at the east end of Long Island with Sir William Erskine. Admiral Gambier is gone to Rhode Island; and one of my most intelligent correspondents informs me, that it is surmised the troops at that place are to be withdrawn. Transports with provisions have gone from New York to Rhode Island, and a number of privateers have been detained from their cruises and sent along with them.

Upon the whole, I cannot help suspecting, that the preparations have been too long making, too formidable, and too open, for any enterprise against New London, concerning which place the fears of the people are awake; and, as we cannot tell where it may fall, we should, as far as human prudence and the means in our hands will enable us, be guarded at all points. The sole purpose of this letter, therefore, is to suggest for your consideration the expediency of adopting, in time some general plan (without taking notice of the present suggestion, thereby creating probably unnecessary fears) for giving an alarm to the militia of the country, and for fixing on places of rendezvous for them, that in cases of sudden emergency they may quickly assemble, free from tumult or disorder; for be assured, if any thing is attempted against the city of Philadelphia, the preparations for it will be held under the darkest veil, and the movement, when

the plan is ripe for execution, will be rapid. As my motive for this suggestion is good, I will offer no apology for the freedom, but assure you that I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO JAMES WARREN, IN MASSACHUSETTS.

Middlebrook, 31 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter came to my hands in Philadelphia, where I attended, at the request of Congress, to settle some important matters respecting the army and its future operations, and where I was detained until some time in February. During that period my time was so much occupied by the immediate and pressing business which carried me down, that I could attend to little else; and upon my return to camp I found the ordinary business of the army had run so much behindhand, that, together with the arrangements I had to carry into execution, no leisure was left me to indulge myself sooner in making the acknowledgment I am now about to do, of the pleasure I felt at finding that I still enjoyed a share of your confidence and esteem, and that I am now and then to be informed of it by letter. Believe me, Sir, when I add, that this proof of your holding me in remembrance is most acceptable and pleasing.

Our conflict is not likely to cease so soon as every good man would wish. The measure of iniquity is not yet filled; and, unless we can return a little more to first principles, and act a little more upon patriotic grounds, I do not know when it will be, or what may be the issue of the contest. Speculation, peculation, engrossing, forestalling, with all their concomitants, afford too many melancholy proofs of the decay of public virtue,

and too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of too many, who would wish to be thought friends, to continue the war. Nothing, I am convinced, but the depreciation of our currency, proceeding in a great measure from the foregoing causes, aided by stockjobbing and party dissensions, has fed the hopes of the enemy and kept the British arms in America to this day. They do not scruple to declare this themselves, and add, that we shall be our own conquerors. Cannot our common country, America, possess virtue enough to disappoint them? Is the paltry consideration of a little pelf to individuals to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generation, and of millions yet unborn? Shall a few designing men, for their own aggrandizement, and to gratify their own avarice, overset the goodly fabric we have been rearing at the expense of so much time, blood, and treasure? And shall we at last become the victims of our own lust of gain? Forbid it Heaven! Forbid it all and every State in the Union, by enacting and enforcing efficacious laws for checking the growth of these monstrous evils, and restoring matters in some degree to the state they were in at the commencement of the war!

Our cause is noble. It is the cause of mankind, and the danger to it is to be apprehended from ourselves. Shall we slumber and sleep, then, while we should be punishing those miscreants, who have brought these troubles upon us, and who are aiming to continue us in them; while we should be striving to fill our battalions, and devising ways and means to raise the value of the currency, on the credit of which every thing depends? I hope not. Let vigorous measures be adopted; not to limit the prices of articles, for this I believe is inconsistent with the very nature of things, and impracticable

in itself; but to punish speculators, forestallers, and extortioners, and above all to sink the money by heavy taxes, to promote public and private economy, and encourage manufactures. Measures of this sort, gone heartily into by the several States, would strike at once at the root of all our evils, and give the *coup de grace* to the British hope of subjugating this continent, either by their arms or their arts. The former, as I have before observed, they acknowledge are unequal to the task; the latter I am sure will be so, if we are not lost to every thing that is good and virtuous.

A little time now must in some degree unfold the enemy's designs. Whether the state of affairs in Europe will permit them to augment their army with more than recruits enough for the regiments now on the continent, and therewith make an active and vigorous campaign; or whether, with their Florida and Canadian force, they will aid and abet the Indians in ravaging our western frontier, while their shipping, with detachments, harass, (and if they mean to prosecute the predatory war, threatened by the administration through their commissioners) burn, and destroy our seacoast; or whether, contrary to expectation, they should be more disposed to negotiate than to do either, is more than I can determine. The latter will depend very much upon their apprehensions from the court of Spain, and expectations of foreign aid and powerful alliances. At present we seem to be in a chaos. But this cannot last long, as I suppose the ultimate determination of the British court will be developed at the meeting of Parliament after the holydays. Mrs. Washington joins me in cordial wishes and best respects to Mrs. Warren. She would have done herself the pleasure of writing, but the present conveyance was sudden. I am, with sincère esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL AARON BURR.

Middlebrook, 3 April, 1779.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge your favor of the 10th ultimo. Perfectly satisfied, that no consideration, save a desire to rëestablish your health, could induce you to leave the service, I cannot therefore withhold my consent. But, in giving permission to your retiring from the army, I am not only to regret the loss of a good officer, but the cause which makes his resignation necessary. When it is convenient to transmit the settlement of your public accounts, it will receive my final acceptance. I am, &c.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

Head-Quarters, 4 April, 1779.

SIR,

I had not the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 31st ultimo before yesterday evening. From this circumstance and some others that have occurred, I am sorry to inform you, that the proposed meeting of commissioners cannot take place at so early a day as you have mentioned. I am under the necessity of requesting, that it may be deferred till Monday the 12th instant, when Colonel Davies and Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison will meet Colonel Hyde and Captain André at Amboy, in the forenoon. Those gentlemen, I am persuaded, will enter upon business with the most liberal and generous dispositions; and from thence I am happy to conceive with you the most favorable expectations. You will, however, suffer me to observe, that, should the intended negotiation answer our wishes,

yet it will not flow from that partiality, which you have been pleased to suppose.* Our commissary of prisoners will attend at Amboy during the commission, and I shall also order an escort of an officer and six dragoons. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 14 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your several favors of the 2d, 3d, and 28th of March, and 6th of April. I thank you for them all, but especially for the last, which I consider as a distinguishing mark of your confidence and friendship.† Conscious that it is the aim of my actions to promote the public good, and that no part of my conduct is influenced by personal enmity to individuals, I cannot be insensible to the artifices employed by some men to prejudice me in the public esteem. The circumstance, of which you have obliged me with the

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* Alluding to the hint in Sir Henry Clinton's letter, that he was encouraged to hope for a negotiation on more liberal terms, since it was no longer under the control of Congress. — See APPENDIX, No. III.

† *Philadelphia, April 6th.* — "Mr. Jay presents his compliments to General Washington, and encloses an extract from a letter in a certain degree interesting."

General Gates to the President of Congress. — "The enclosed copy of my letter to General Washington of the 4th instant, in answer to his of the 14th ultimo from Middlebrook, will give Congress a true idea of my opinion respecting our entering Canada, and the only route we can take with reasonable hopes of success. Individuals and not the public will be benefited by an expedition into Canada, by either of the routes from Albany. That of Coos alone is practicable, but not without the coöperation of the allied fleet. General Washington's letter of the 14th of February is enclosed. It being the only letter I have received from his Excellency since December, Congress will immediately judge of the extent or limitation, which it is proper to observe in their instructions to me." — *March 15th.*

communication, is among a number of other instances of the unfriendly views, which have governed a certain gentleman from a very early period. Some of these have been too notorious not to have come to your knowledge. Others, from the manner in which they have been conveyed to me, will probably never be known, except to a very few. But you have perhaps heard enough, and observed enough yourself, to make any further explanation from me unnecessary.

The desire, however, which it is natural I should feel to preserve the good opinion of men of sense and virtue, conspiring with my wish to cultivate your friendship in particular, induces me to trouble you with a state of some facts, which will serve to place the present attack in its proper light. In doing this, I shall recapitulate and bring into one view a series of transactions, many of which have been known to you, but some of which may possibly have escaped your memory.

An opinion prevailing that the enemy were likely shortly to evacuate these States, I was naturally led to turn my thoughts to a plan of operations against Canada, *in case that event should take place.* A winter campaign, before the enemy could have an opportunity of reinforcing and putting themselves in a more perfect state of defence, appeared to promise the most certain and speedy success, and the route by Coos offered itself as most direct and practicable. In this I fully agreed with General Gates and some other gentlemen, whom I consulted on the occasion; and, on the 12th of September last, I wrote to Congress accordingly, submitting it to them, whether it would be advisable to be laying up magazines, opening a road, and making other preparations for the undertaking. They approved the project, and authorized me to carry it into execution.

I the more readily entered into it, from the consideration, that, if circumstances should not permit us to carry on the enterprise, the preparations towards it could easily be converted into another channel, and made serviceable to our operations elsewhere, without any material addition of expense to the continent. Because provisions, which would compose the principal part of the expense, were, at all events, to be purchased on the Connecticut River, the only doubt being whether they should be used in an expedition against Canada, or transported to Boston. Circumstances were to determine this. With truth it may be added, that, excepting the articles of provision and forage, which, as before observed, would have been bought if no expedition by the way of Coos had been in contemplation, the "*incredible* expense," mentioned by General Gates in his letter of March 4th, amounted to the purchase of a few pairs of snow-shoes and some leather for moccasins only. If any other expense has been incurred, it is unknown to me, and must have been by his order, and he alone is answerable for it.

In October following, Congress entered into arrangements with the Marquis de Lafayette for coöperating with the court of France, in an expedition against that country. In this scheme, one body of troops was to proceed from Coos and penetrate by way of the river St. Francis; others, forming a junction at Niagara, were to enter Canada by that route; and, while these were operating in this manner, a French fleet and a body of French troops were to go up the river St. Lawrence and take possession of Quebec. You are well acquainted with the opposition I gave to this plan, and my reasons at large for it. From what has since happened, they seem to have met the full approbation of Congress. The ideas I held up were principally these;

that we ought not to enter into any contract with a foreign power, unless we were sure we should be able to fulfil our engagements; that it was uncertain whether the enemy would quit the States or not; and, in case they did not, it would be impracticable to furnish the aids we had stipulated; that, even if they should leave us, it was very doubtful whether our resources would be equal to the supplies required; that, therefore, it would be impolitic to hazard a contract of the kind, and better to remain at liberty to act as future conjunctures should point out. I recommended, nevertheless, as there were powerful reasons to hope the enemy might go away, that eventual preparations should be made to take advantage of it, to possess ourselves of Niagara and other posts in that quarter for the security of our frontiers, and to carry our views still farther, with respect to a conquest of Canada, if we should find ourselves able to prosecute such an enterprise. This, Congress, in a subsequent resolve, approved and directed to be done. It was not *the least* motive with me for recommending it, that operations of this nature seemed to be a very favorite object with that honorable body. The preparations on Hudson's River were undertaken in consequence.

Upon a nearer view of our finances and resources, and when it came to be decided, that the enemy would continue for some time longer to hold the posts they were in possession of; in the course of the conferences with which I was honored by the committee of Congress in Philadelphia, I suggested my doubts of the propriety of continuing our northern preparations upon so extensive a plan, as was at first determined. The committee were of opinion with me, that the state of our currency and supplies in general would oblige us to act on the defensive next campaign, except so far as

related to an expedition into the Indian country for chastising the savages and preventing their depredations on our back settlements; and that, though it would be extremely desirable to be prepared for pushing our operations further, yet our necessities, exacting a system of economy, forbade our launching into much extra expense for objects, which were remote and contingent. This determination having taken place, all our northern preparations were discontinued, except such as were necessary towards the intended Indian expedition.

Things were in this situation, when I received a letter from General Bayley, living at Coos, expressing some fears for the safety of the magazine at Coos, in consequence of which I directed the stores to be removed lower down the country. This I did to prevent a possibility of accident, though I did not apprehend they were in much danger. Some time afterwards, I received a letter from General Gates, expressing similar fears; to which I returned him the answer of the 14th of February transmitted by him to Congress. Knowing that preparations had been making at Albany, and unacquainted with their true design, he very precipitately concluded, from a vague expression in that letter, that the intention of attacking Canada was still adhered to, but that I had changed the plan and was going by the way of Lake Champlain or Ontario. Either of these routes he pronounces impracticable, and represents that by Coos as the only practicable one. He goes still further, and declares, that "in the present state of our army, and the actual situation of our magazines, to attempt a serious invasion of Canada, by whatever route, would prove unsuccessful, unless the fleet of our allies should at the same time coöperate with us by sailing up the river St. Lawrence."

Though I differ from him as to the impracticability of both the other routes, I venture to go a step beyond him respecting our ability to invade Canada, and am convinced, that, in our present circumstances, and with the enemy in front, we cannot undertake a serious invasion of that country at all, even with the aid of an allied fleet. You will perceive, Sir, that I have uniformly made the departure of the enemy from these States *an essential condition* to the invasion of Canada; and that General Gates has entirely mistaken my intentions. Hoping that I had embarked in a scheme, which our situation would not justify, he eagerly seizes the opportunity of exposing my supposed errors to Congress; and, in the excess of his intemperate zeal to injure me, exhibits himself in a point of view, from which I imagine he will derive little credit. The decency of the terms in which he undertakes to arraign my conduct, both to myself and to Congress, and the propriety of the hasty appeal he has made, will, I believe, appear at least questionable to every man of sense and delicacy.

The last paragraph of the extract, with which you favor me, is a pretty remarkable one. I shall make no comments further, than as it implies a charge of neglect on my part, in not writing to him but once since December. From the beginning of last campaign to the middle of December, about seven months, I have copies of near fifty letters to him, and about forty originals from him. I think it will be acknowledged, that the correspondence was frequent enough during that period; and, if it has not continued in the same proportion since, the only reason was, that the season of the year, the troops being in winter-quarters, and General Gates's situation at Boston unfruitful of events and unproductive of any military arrangements between us,

afforded very little matter for epistolary intercourse; and I flatter myself it will be readily believed, that I am sufficiently occupied with the necessary business of my station, and have no need of increasing it by multiplying letters without an object. If you were to peruse, my dear Sir, the letters which have passed between General Gates and myself for a long time back, you would be sensible that I have no great temptation to court his correspondence, when the transacting of public business does not require it. An air of design, a want of candor in many instances, and even of politeness, give no very inviting complexion to the correspondence on his part. As a specimen of this, I send you a few letters and extracts, which, at your leisure, I should be glad that you would cast your eye upon.

Last fall, it was for some time strongly suspected that the enemy would transport the whole or the greater part of their force eastward, and combine one great land and sea operation against the French fleet in Boston harbour. On this supposition, as I should go in person to Boston, the command next in importance was the posts on the North River. This properly would devolve on General Gates; but, from motives of peculiar scrupulousness, as there had been a difference between us, I thought it best to know whether it was agreeable to him, before I directed his continuance. By way of compliment, I wrote him a letter, expecting a cordial answer and cheerful acceptance. I received an evasive and unsatisfactory reply.* A few

* The following extracts from the letters here referred to were copied, and sent to the President of Congress with the above letter.

General Washington to General Gates. — "There is a point, which I wish to mention to you, and I shall be glad if it coincides with your own inclination. If the movements of the enemy make it necessary for

days after this, upon another occasion, I wrote him a letter, to which I received an extraordinary answer, which was passed over in silence.

The plan of operations for the campaign being determined, a commanding officer was to be appointed for the Indian expedition. This command, according to all present appearances, will probably be of the second if not of the first importance for the campaign. The officer conducting it has a flattering prospect of acquiring more credit, than can be expected by any other this year; and he has the best reason to hope

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the main body of the army to proceed to the eastward, there will still remain a considerable command for the defence and security of the Highland posts. This, from several resolutions of Congress heretofore upon the subject, and from several other considerations, it seems to me, will be proper for you. It will and must extend to the forces employed above, and on the frontier of this State; and I am persuaded that it will be agreeable to the views and wishes of Congress. But if this could not be supposed to be the case, there is another circumstance which appears to render your remaining in this department extremely necessary. This State, I am authorized to say, dislikes General Putnam, and, not reposing confidence in him, will be uneasy if he should be left in command." — *September 26th*, 1778.

General Gates' Reply. — "From the beginning of the war, I devoted myself to the service of the United States; and while I continue to serve, I shall cheerfully obey all orders from Congress, your Excellency, or any of my superior officers. Your Excellency has, therefore, only to signify your commands, to have them instantly obeyed." — *September 27th.*

General Washington wrote again on the 30th of September, giving an account of the manner in which the different parts of the army were stationed, and of the attack on Baylor's regiment.

General Gates' Reply. — "I am sorry for the disgrace we have suffered in the Jerseys, but imagine the enemy take advantage of the supineness, that constantly seizes upon our people, when they have been long unmolested. This is an evil, that even the best officers cannot remedy. Your Excellency will excuse me, when I say, I like not the divided state of your army. The enemy are on the *qui vive*. They have the advantage of a river to navigate upon each of our flanks. To divide is to conquer, in politics; I hope it may not, with regard to us, prove so in war. I hope Lord Stirling and General Maxwell will answer all your Excellency's expectations in the Jerseys. They certainly are best acquainted with that quarter." — *September 30th.*

for success. General Lee, from his situation, was out of the question; General Schuyler (who, by the way, would have been most agreeable to me) was so uncertain of continuing in the army, that I could not appoint him; General Putnam I need not mention. I therefore made the offer of it, for the appointment could no longer be delayed, to General Gates, who was next in seniority, though, perhaps I might have avoided it, if I had been so disposed, from his being in a command by the special appointment of Congress. My letter to him on the occasion I believe you will think was conceived in very candid and polite terms, and that it merited a different answer from the one given to it.*

I discovered very early in the war symptoms of coldness and constraint in General Gates's behaviour to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach, till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned by a correspondence, which I thought made rather free with me, between Generals Gates and Conway, which accidentally came to my knowledge. The particulars of this affair you will find delineated in the packet sent herewith, endorsed "Papers respecting General Conway." Besides the evidence, contained in them, of the genuineness of the offensive correspondence, I have other proofs still more convincing, which, having been given me in a confidential way, I am not at liberty to impart.

After this affair subsided, I made a point of treating General Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony, as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph

* Dated March 6th and 16th. See above, pp. 187, 189.

to our enemies, from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the whole army and to the world, whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint, that could tend to disparage General Gates in any way. I am sorry his conduct to me has not been equally generous, and that he is continually giving me fresh proofs of malevolence and opposition. It will not be doing him injustice to say, that, besides the little, underhand intrigues, which he is frequently practising, there has hardly been any great military question, in which his advice has been asked, that it has not been given in an equivocal and designing manner, apparently calculated to afford him an opportunity of censuring me, on the failure of whatever measure might be adopted.

When I find that this gentleman does not scruple to take the most unfair advantages of me, I am under a necessity of explaining his conduct to justify my own. This, and the perfect confidence I have in you, have occasioned me to trouble you with so free a communication of the state of things between us. I shall still be as passive as a regard to my own character will permit. I am, however, uneasy, as General Gates has endeavoured to impress Congress with an unfavorable idea of me; and, as I only know this in a private, confidential way, I cannot take any step to remove the impression, if it should be made.

I am aware, Sir, of the delicacy of your situation; and I mean this letter only for your own private information. You will, therefore, not allow yourself to be embarrassed by its contents, but with respect to me pass it over in silence. With the truest esteem and personal regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* In regard to Gates's letter to Congress, Mr. Jay wrote; — "The impression attempted to be made has not taken. It passed without a single

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 21 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last letter, and upon a further consideration of the subject, I have relinquished the idea of attempting a coöperation between the troops at Fort Pitt and the bodies moving from other quarters against the Six Nations. The difficulty of providing supplies in time, a want of satisfactory information of the route and of the nature of the country up the Allegany River, and between that and the Indian settlements, and consequently the uncertainty of being able to coöperate to advantage, and the hazard which the smaller party might run, are principal motives for declining it. The danger to which the frontier would be exposed, by drawing off the troops from their present position, and the incursions of the more western tribes, are additional though less powerful reasons. The post at Tuscarora is therefore to be preserved, if under a full consideration of circumstances it is judged a post of importance, and can be maintained without running too great a risk, and if the troops in general under your command are disposed in the manner best calculated to cover and protect the country on a defensive plan.

As it is my wish, however, as soon as it may be in our power, to chastise the western savages by an ex-

remark. Your friends thought it merited nothing but silence and neglect. The same reason induced me to take no notice of it in my answer. I have perused the several papers with which you favored me. The delicacy, candor, and temper diffused through your letters, form a strong contrast to the evasions and design observable in some others. Gratitude ought to have attached a certain gentleman to the friend who raised him; a spurious ambition, however, has, it seems, made him your enemy." — *April 21st.*

pedition into their country, you will employ yourself in the mean time in making preparations, and forming competent magazines of provisions for the purpose. If the expedition against the Six Nations is successfully ended, a part of the troops employed in it will probably be sent, in conjunction with those under you, to carry on another that way. You will endeavour to obtain and transmit to me every kind of intelligence, which will be necessary to direct our operations, as precise, full, and authentic as possible. Among other points, you will try to ascertain the most favorable season for an enterprise against Detroit. The frozen season, in the opinion of most persons, is the only one in which any capital stroke can be given, as the enemy can derive no benefit from their shipping, which must either be destroyed or fall into our hands.

I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Middlebrook, 22 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed is a letter to you in your official character. This you will be pleased to receive as private and confidential, to explain for your own satisfaction the reasons, which will oblige me to draw off Maxwell's brigade from its present position, and will prevent my replacing them by other troops.

I have for a long time past been preparing for a decisive expedition against the Six Nations, which is now approaching fast to the period fixed for its execution. The short term of service for which the militia can be drawn out, by the laws of the different States, concurring with other obvious reasons, has determined me to

employ on this service almost wholly Continental troops. The force of the savages, with the aid they may derive from the British garrisons on the Lakes, makes it necessary, in order to give a sufficient probability of success to the undertaking, to detach so considerable a force from this quarter, as will leave the main army rather in a delicate situation. To provide for its security as far as possible, I shall be under a necessity of keeping it in a collected state; and this will of course oblige me to afford less cover to the country, than has been done for some time past, till our numbers can be rendered more respectable by the accession of the levies, which I hope will be raised in the different States towards completing their battalions. It is very disagreeable to me to throw any burthen upon the militia at this season of the year; but you will readily perceive, my dear Sir, that it is not in my power to avoid it.

You will also perceive, that I mean to withdraw the Monmouth detachment. An additional motive for it is, that the enemy appear to have a number of active emissaries in that part of the country, who have been very successful in corrupting our men. An alarming spirit of mutiny and desertion has shown itself upon several occasions, and there is no saying how extensively the infection might spread. Sensible as you will be of the importance of keeping our true situation a profound secret to the enemy, I am persuaded you will make a cautious use of what I now communicate. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 23 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

In one of your former letters you intimate, that a free communication of sentiments will not be displeasing to you. If, under this sanction, I should step beyond the line you would wish to draw, and suggest ideas, or ask questions, which are improper to be answered, you have only to pass them by in silence. I wish you to be convinced, that I do not desire to pry into measures, the knowledge of which is not necessary for my government as an executive officer, or the premature discovery of which might be prejudicial to the plans in contemplation.

After premising this, I beg leave to ask, what are the reasons for keeping the Continental frigates in port? If it is because hands cannot be obtained to man them, on the present encouragement, some other plan ought to be adopted to make them useful. Had not Congress better lend them to commanders of known bravery and capacity for a limited term, at the expiration of which, the vessels, if not taken or lost, may revert to the States; they and their crews, in the mean time, enjoying the exclusive benefit of all captures they make, but acting, either singly or conjointly, under the direction of Congress? If this or a similar plan could be fallen upon, comprehending the whole number under some common head, and a man of ability and authority be commissioned as commodore or admiral, I think great advantages would result from it. I am not sure but at this moment, by such a collection of our naval force, all the British armed vessels and transports in Georgia might be taken or destroyed, and their troops ruined. Upon the present system, our ships are not

only very expensive and totally useless in port, but sometimes require a land force to protect them, as happened lately at New London.*

The rumor of the camp is, that Monsieur Gerard is about to return to France. Some speak confidently of its taking place. If this be a fact, the motives doubtless are powerful; as it will open a wide field for speculation, and give our enemies, whether with or without real cause, at least a handle for misrepresentation and triumph. Will Congress suffer the Bermudian vessels, which are said to have arrived in the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays, to exchange their salt for flour, as is reported to be their intention? Will they not rather order them to depart immediately? Indulging them with a supply of provisions at this time will be injurious to us in two respects; it will deprive us of what we really stand in need for ourselves, and will contribute to the support of that swarm of privateers, which resort to the Bermudas, whence they infest our coast, and in a manner annihilate our trade. Besides these considerations, by withholding a supply, we throw many additional mouths upon the enemy's magazines, and increase proportionably their distress. They will not and cannot let their people starve.

In the last place, though first in importance, I shall ask; is there any thing doing, or that can be done, to restore the credit of our money? The depreciа-

* The marine affairs of the United States were under the charge of a committee, consisting of a delegate from each State. It was of course fluctuating, as new members were constantly added, in the place of those who had resigned, or retired from Congress. Thus there was neither consistency nor a system of action. Very few of the members had any knowledge of naval concerns. Party views and local interests contributed to divide the counsels of the Board, and to prevent the adoption of efficient and beneficial measures. These facts are enough to account for any irregularities and want of method and energy in that department.

tion of it has got to so alarming a point, that a wagon-load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon-load of provisions. I repeat, what I before observed, that I do not wish for your reply to more of these matters, than you can touch with strict propriety.

Very truly, I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Middlebrook, 24 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 22d came to my hands about nine o'clock this day. I thank you for the information it contains. After the minister has actually set out,* I shall be glad to be advised of it by express, and, if the knowledge can be obtained readily, to be informed of his stages, and the hour he may be expected at camp. I am sorry for the difficulties you have to encounter in the department of quartermaster, especially as I was in some degree instrumental in bringing you into it. Under these circumstances I cannot undertake to give advice, or even hazard an opinion on the measures best for you to adopt. Your own judgment must direct. If it points to a resignation of your present office, and your inclination leads to the southward, my wishes shall accompany it; and if the appointment of a successor to General Lincoln is left to me, I shall not hesitate in making choice of you for this command. But I have little expectation of being consulted on the occasion. With truth and sincerity, I am, &c.†

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* Monsieur Gerard, the French minister, who was about to visit General Washington's camp.

† General Greene had now served as quartermaster-general for more than a year. He had accepted the appointment reluctantly, but had

TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 27 April, 1779.

SIR,

In a line of yesterday, as I did not think it proper to detain the express and delay the notice then given, till I could prepare a more explicit answer, I only

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executed its duties with great zeal and ability, encountering obstacles, of no ordinary kind, and rendering services of the utmost importance to the army. He was at this time in Philadelphia, endeavouring to effect some arrangements, with the concurrence of Congress, in relation to the business of his department. He found Congress so dilatory, and apparently so little inclined to second his views and his efforts, that he became weary and disgusted. "I am more and more convinced," he wrote to General Washington, "that there are measures taken to render the quartermaster's department odious in the eyes of the people; and, if I have not some satisfaction from the committee of Congress respecting the matter, I shall beg leave to quit the department. I think I shall leave it upon as good a footing as it is possible to put it, under the present difficulties. I am informed General Lincoln's leg is likely to render him incapable of holding his command at the southward. Should that be, and I leave the department I am now in, I should be happy to obtain it." — *April 22d.* General Lincoln had just applied to Congress for permission to retire from the southern command, on account of the unfavorable state of his wound.

Again, two days afterwards General Greene wrote; — "I have desired Congress to give me leave to resign, as I apprehended a loss of reputation if I continued in the business. They are not disposed to grant my request at all; but, unless they change the system, or publish their approbation of the present, I shall not remain long. I will not sacrifice my reputation for any consideration whatever. I am willing to serve the public, but I think I ought to choose that way of performing the service, which will be most honorable to myself. There is a great difference between being raised to an office and descending to one, which is my case. There is also a great difference between serving where you have a fair prospect of honor and laurels, and where you have no prospect of either, let you discharge your duty ever so well. Nobody ever heard of a quartermaster in history, as such, nor in relating any brilliant action. I engaged in the business as well out of compassion to your Excellency, as from a regard to the public. I thought your task too great, to be commander-in-chief and quartermaster at the same time. Money was not my motive; for you may remember I offered to serve a year unconnected with the accounts, without any pay additional to that, which I had as a major-general." — *April 24th.*

briefly acknowledged the receipt of your two letters in Council of the 24th and 25th instant, to which I should have added that of the 26th. I am now to enter into a consideration of their contents, and to offer such particular explanations as may seem necessary to satisfy any doubts, which the honorable the Council may entertain on the subjects they respectively discuss.

The first relates wholly to the trial of Major-General Arnold. It is with concern I observe, that the Council appear to have misconceived the intention of the notifications contained in my letter of the 20th, and to imagine that I had taken up the matter in a different point of view from that in which it is considered by Congress and by themselves, placing them in the light of a party in the prosecution.* I flatter myself that on a revisal of my letter, and of the resolve of Congress on which it is founded, this opinion will be readily retracted. The resolve, of which the enclosed is a copy, directs me to appoint "a court-martial for the trial of General Arnold, on the first, second, third, and fifth articles contained in the resolves of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and to notify them of it, with a request, that they would furnish the evidence to the

* *To Joseph Reed, April 20th.* — "I have, in obedience to a resolve of Congress, directed a court-martial to be held in this camp, on the 1st of May next, for the trial of Major-General Arnold, on the first, second, third, and fifth charges exhibited against him by the Supreme Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania. You will therefore be pleased to furnish the court, at the above time, with the proper evidence in support of the charges."

In reply the Council said, that they apprehended some mistake on the part of Congress in the mode of transmitting the business to General Washington; that they had exhibited no *charges* against General Arnold, except that of appropriating the public wagons of the State to his private use; and that they did not think it consistent with the duty they owed to the State to be considered in the light of a party in the trial. They further said, that, in their representations to Congress, they only intended to express an opinion of General Arnold's conduct, and to specify the

court." My letter was intended as a simple compliance with this order, and accordingly informs them, that I had directed a court to be held at this camp, on the 1st of May next, for the trial of Major-General Arnold, on the first, second, third, and fifth charges exhibited against him by the Council, requesting that they would be pleased to furnish the court at the appointed time with the proper evidence in support of the charges. The terms of this letter were such as, in common speaking, naturally presented themselves to express what was intended; because the charges there said to be exhibited by the Council, though in their present form they are instituted by the authority of Congress, originated in the resolves of the Council, of which they compose a part. But if they contain any ambiguity, or seem to imply more than those of the resolve, it is entirely to be ascribed to inadvertence and to a want of precision. It will easily be seen, that they could not be meant to convey the idea supposed, when it is recollected to be a fundamental maxim in our military trials, that the judge-advocate prosecutes in the name and in behalf of the United States. But, as it is customary and reasonable, for those who exhibit informations, on which charges are founded, to produce or point out the witnesses necessary to support them, and enable

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points in which they thought him censurable; that their understanding of the matter was, from a conference between the joint committees of Congress and the Council, that the papers relating to the subject, with the names of the witnesses, were to be sent to the Commander-in-chief, and that the attendance of the witnesses would then be procured, either by his authority or by the order of Congress. The Council approved the trial, because they believed General Arnold's conduct deserved some military reprehension, but at the same time they rejected the idea of being regarded as a party in the prosecution. They also considered the time allowed before the assembling of the court to be much too short, as two of the principal witnesses had gone to Carolina, and another was in Virginia. — *President Reed's MS. Letter, April 24th.*

public justice to operate; on this principle, I presume, Congress directed the notification, which has been made, and in the same spirit it was my intention to convey it. Further than this I had no idea of considering the Council as a party.

My motives for appointing the trial to take place at so short a period were these. The season is fast advancing, when we shall be under a necessity of taking the field; and as it is at most times very inconvenient (in the present state of the army impracticable) to spare a sufficient number of officers of high rank to compose a court at a distance from camp, and almost equally so to be carrying on a long and perhaps complicated trial in the midst of the operations of a campaign, it was my wish to bring it on at once, in hopes it might be concluded before they began. This was one reason, and to me a weighty one. Another was, that General Arnold had written to me in a very pressing manner, requesting the trial might commence as soon as possible. Uninformed of the particular circumstances, which might require delay, and considering it as my duty to accelerate the execution of justice, as well to the public, in case of real guilt, as to the individual, if innocent, I could have no objection to complying with his request. As the affair had been a considerable time in agitation, I took it for granted the Council were acquainted with the order of Congress for appointing a court. I concluded the witnesses would be prepared, and that little time was necessary to collect them. The remoteness of the persons alluded to, I could not foresee. The affair of the two officers is entirely new to me; nor did it ever occur to my mind as probable, that the gentlemen, whom I conjecture to be hinted at, were intended to be summoned as witnesses on the side of the prosecution.

I can assure the Council, with the greatest truth, that "substantial justice, not a mere formality, will undoubtedly be my object on this occasion." I shall endeavour to act, and I wish to be considered, merely as a public executive officer, alike unbiassed by personal favor or resentment, and having no other end in view, than a faithful, ingenuous discharge of his duty. To obviate the remotest appearance of a different disposition, as well as to give the freest operation to truth, I have determined to defer the trial till the 1st of June, if it is thought the most material witnesses can be produced by that time, or till the 1st of July, if it is deemed necessary to await the arrival of the two officers from Carolina.

I am therefore to request of the Council information on this head, and that they will be pleased to point out, without delay, the persons who are to be called as witnesses in the affair. Where my authority will produce their attendance, it is my duty to exercise it; where I have no right to order, I can only request; but where any citizens of the State of Pennsylvania are concerned, I doubt not the Council will employ its influence and authority to induce their appearance.

As to the officers, who may compose the court-martial, I trust the respectability of their characters will put their honor and impartiality out of the reach of suspicion. The expense of witnesses, as the prosecution is in behalf of the United States, I take it for granted will be borne by them. Whether it will be possible for the court to sit at or near Philadelphia depends upon circumstances, which cannot now be foreseen; at this time it could not by any means be done; if it can be done hereafter, without prejudice to the service, it will be very agreeable to me. The mode of conducting the trial will be strictly conformable to

the orders of Congress, and to the sentiments I have now expressed; and I hope will not be thought in any degree to deviate from the respect due to the Council.*

It gives me much pain to find, by your letter of the 26th, that there is not a better prospect of aid from the militia of your State in the intended Indian expedition. The drawing out the militia into service will no doubt interfere with the culture of the lands, and it were to be wished that it could be avoided. But the reduced state of our regiments, and the little apparent probability of augmenting them, will not allow me to prosecute a vigorous offensive operation to the westward, wholly with Continental troops, without weakening the main army so much, as to put every thing to hazard this way. Influenced by considerations of this nature, I applied to your State for six hundred men; to New York for an undeterminate number, which has voted one thousand to be employed on the frontier also; and to New Jersey to replace, as far as was thought proper, the Continental troops now stationed on the coast, which will of necessity be withdrawn. If these applications have not the desired effect, bad as the consequences may be, I can only wish what I am unable to accomplish, and regret what it is not in my power to prevent.

Notwithstanding the cautious terms in which the idea is conveyed, I beg leave to express my sensibility to the suggestion contained, not only in your letter of the 25th, but in a former one, that the frontier of Pennsylvania is left unguarded and exposed, while that of some other States is covered and protected. Nor can I be less affected by the manner of the appli-

* For other particulars respecting General Arnold's trial, see APPENDIX, No. IV.

cation for stationary troops, in case the proposed expedition should be laid aside; an event, which I could hardly have thought supposable. I am not conscious of the least partiality to one State, or neglect of another. If any one has cause to complain of the latter, it is Virginia, whose wide extended frontier has had no cover, but from troops more immediately beneficial to the southwestern part of Pennsylvania, which, besides this, has had its northern frontier covered by Spencer's, Pulaski's and Armand's corps; its middle, by Hartley's and some independent companies. That these troops were unequal to the task is not to be denied, nor that a greater number was sent at the close of last campaign to the western frontier of New York. But, for the former, the scantiness of our means is a sufficient reason. If the abilities and resources of the States cannot furnish a more competent force, assailable as we are on all sides, they will surely be more just, than to expect from the army protection at every point. As to the latter, those troops were not sent to be stationary. The repeated accounts transmitted by Congress, and received from other quarters, of the ravages actually committed, and the still greater ones threatened upon the western frontier of that State, occasioned so considerable a detachment, with a view to some offensive operations in the winter. But these, through unforeseen impediments, we were obliged to lay aside. All these troops, except the garrison of Fort Schuyler, are now destined for the Indian expedition, and are preparing for it.

I have been thus particular from a scrupulous desire to show, that no part of my conduct indicates a predilection to one State more than to another; but that, as far as the means in my hands will extend, I aim equally at the security and welfare of all. This is only

to be obtained by vigorous exertions, and, in the present case, these must depend on the aid which the States most interested will give. With great esteem and respect, I am, Sir, &c.

TO MONSIEUR GERARD, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY FROM HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 1 May, 1779.

SIR,

As you have been pleased to honor me with a communication of Count d'Estaing's intentions of returning to this continent, with the squadron under his command, and have desired to know my sentiments of the manner in which this event may be best improved for the interest of the common cause, and what can be done on the part of these States towards that end, I beg leave to offer the following as the definitive result of my reflections on this subject, without recapitulating the particular reasons on which it is founded, and which have been already detailed in our several conferences.

I consider it as an essential basis to any extensive combined operations between the squadron of His Most Christian Majesty and the troops of these States, that the former shall possess, and have a good prospect of preserving, a clear superiority over the British naval force in America. In this case, if explicit assurances can be given, that Count d'Estaing will proceed with all despatch directly from Martinique to New York, so as to arrive there in all probability before the British fleet under Admiral Byron; with the permission and approbation of Congress, I will engage to relinquish all the present projects of the campaign, and collect

our whole force in this quarter, with all the aid which can be derived from the militia of the neighbouring States, to coöperate with the squadron of His Most Christian Majesty for the reduction of the enemy's fleet and army at New York, Rhode Island, and their dependencies.

I make this offer from a persuasion, that we should be able to collect a sufficient force to give a reasonable prospect of success to an enterprise decisive in its nature; and I request explicit assurances of a coöperation in the manner proposed, because without them I could not be justified in abandoning measures and engagements, in which the security of these States is so deeply concerned, and because a failure would be attended with the most serious mischiefs. If these assurances cannot be given, the plan, which then appears to me most eligible, is this. That Count d'Estaing proceed with his squadron immediately to Georgia, where, in conjunction with the American troops, there is every reason to believe he would with great facility capture and destroy the enemy's fleet and army; which they could only elude in part, and that not without great difficulty, by a precipitate retreat to St. Augustine; and, even in this case, their vessels and stores would inevitably fall. That he next proceed directly from Georgia to New York, where, if he arrives before Admiral Byron, by entering the harbour expeditiously he will be sure of taking or destroying all their fleet in that port. The troops on Staten Island might also, I conceive, be intercepted and taken; the French troops in the fleet landing on one part, and a detachment from our army at another. Successes of this kind might open a new field of action, and lead to other important events. On the arrival of the fleet at the Hook, if a few frigates could be spared to be de-

spatched to Rhode Island, to capture and destroy their vessels and obstruct their retreat, it would answer a very important end.

Either of these plans being pursued, if attended with important successes, so as to disembarrass these States of the whole or the principal part of the enemy's force now within them, it would put it in their power to co-operate with the forces of His Most Christian Majesty in prosecuting such offensive enterprises against the enemy elsewhere, as shall be deemed promotive of the honor and interest of the allied powers; which cannot be expected while the immediate internal safety of the States is endangered by formidable fleets and armies, requiring the exertion of all their strength and resources in their own defence.

Having done myself the honor to submit to your Excellency my ideas of the operations, which may be adopted with the greatest prospect of mutual advantage in the event you have been pleased to suggest, I doubt not, if either of the plans be approved wholly or in part, your answer will enable me to determine with precision the line of conduct, which ought to govern my operations relative to the objects they comprehend. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect respect, and the greatest personal esteem, &c.*

* M. Gerard was now on a visit to the camp, to which place he had come to consult General Washington respecting the operations of Count d'Estaing's fleet. In consequence of the suggestions of Congress on this subject, M. Gerard had written to Count d'Estaing, then in the West Indies, proposing a combined expedition against Georgia, and such other operations on the American seaboard, as circumstances should point out. Count d'Estaing replied, that he expected to be on the coast of Carolina by the end of May, and to proceed thence to the Delaware River. It was his design to attack Halifax, and afterwards Newfoundland, if provisions and a sufficient number of men could be furnished by the United States. M. Gerard consulted the President of Congress and two or three members before he went to camp. The question was frankly discussed

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 3 May, 1779.

SIR,

I enclose extracts from some letters and papers lately received from General Schuyler, which are interesting in their nature, and require immediate direction. They are rather of a remote date, having been long in coming to hand. Congress will perceive that some of the hostile tribes of Indians, the Cayugas in particular, are desirous of making peace with us, and that it will be necessary to give our commissioners instructions on this subject. I am inclined to think, in our present situation, it may be politic enough to make a partial peace with some of the tribes, though I should not wish to see it extended to the whole, even if their inclination, prompted by their fears, should lead them

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by General Washington, but he was satisfied the plan could not succeed. It was impossible for him to spare troops for such an expedition from the small army, with which he was obliged to defend the country against the English on one side and the savages on the other. The English had eleven thousand men in New York, and five thousand at Rhode Island. Militia could not be relied on for an enterprise like that meditated against Halifax, and regular troops could not be supplied without abandoning the plan of the campaign, and leaving the country exposed. — *MS. Letter from M. Gerard to Count Vergennes, May 6th.*

As there was little probability, that Count d'Estaing would maintain a superiority over the British fleet in the American seas, the plan of a combined attack upon New York was likewise given up. It was finally agreed, that Count d'Estaing should make an effort to succour Georgia and Carolina, and should then sail to the mouth of the Delaware, and pursue such ulterior operations as should be concerted between him and Congress for the greatest advantage of the United States. In writing to Congress on the subject, M. Gerard said; — "The underwritten makes no doubt, that this new proof of his Majesty's generous and disinterested friendship will fortify that confidence, which his engagements and his conduct ought to have inspired in the people of America. Facts so evident will serve on the other hand to confound those evil-minded persons, who, by absurd and clandestine insinuations, void not only of all proof, but of all probability, and directed only by private views and

to solicit it; of which however there is no present appearance. A disposition to peace in these people can only be ascribed to an apprehension of danger, and would last no longer than till it was over, and an opportunity offered to resume their hostility with safety and success. This makes it necessary that we should endeavour to punish them severely for what has passed, and by an example of rigor intimidate them for the future. But by confining this to those nations, who are most formidable and mischievous, the end will be answered, and, by detaching a part from the confederacy, we shall lessen the force we have to combat, add perhaps to our own, and make the stroke intended more easy and certain. This policy seems the more eligible, from the accounts given of the detachment, which is designed to be sent from Canada to the westward. This is a measure I have all along dreaded, and, to

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clearly opposed to the honor and interest of the confederated republic, endeavour to sow doubts and jealousies, of which the common enemy alone will reap the fruits." — *May 9th.*

When Congress received the letter from the minister of France, stating the purposes of Count d'Estaing, it was resolved, "that a copy of it be transmitted to General Washington, and that he consider himself at liberty so to direct the military operations of these States, as shall appear to him most expedient." — *Journals, May 10th.* In communicating these very extensive powers, the President added; "Congress confide fully in your Excellency's prudence and abilities; and I am directed to signify to you their wish, that neither an undue degree of delicacy nor diffidence may lead you to place too little reliance on your own judgment, or persuade you to make any further communications of your designs than are necessary, or high expedience may dictate."

While M. Gerard was in camp, he wrote to Count Vergennes; — "I have had many conversations with General Washington, some of which have continued for three hours. It is impossible for me briefly to communicate the fund of intelligence, which I have derived from him, but I shall do it in my letters as occasions shall present themselves. I will now say only, that I have formed as high an opinion of the powers of his mind, his moderation, his patriotism, and his virtues, as I had before from common report conceived of his military talents and of the incalculable services he has rendered to his country." — *MS. Letter, May 4.*

prevent it if possible, have employed every artifice I could think of to excite jealousies of an invasion of Canada, and induce the enemy there to keep their force at home. I have directed that effectual measures may be taken to ascertain the intelligence of the western reinforcement. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COLONEL WILLIAM MALCOM.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 3 May, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your favor of the 1st instant. I very much lament the dangerous spirit, which appears among the men of your late corps; but as it cannot be considered in any other light than that of mutiny, pregnant with the most pernicious consequences, I am clearly of opinion their request cannot be indulged, and have written to Colonel Spencer to this effect, directing him to employ the most effectual measures to compel the obedience of the refractory and punish the instigators. And, though it will be disagreeable to drive a matter of this kind to extremity, I am determined, rather than establish a precedent of the most dangerous nature, even to send a detachment from this army to enforce submission. I am, Sir, &c.*

* By the new arrangements of the army Colonel Malcom's and Colonel Spencer's regiments were to be united into one, which was to be commanded by Colonel Spencer. Both the officers and men of Malcom's regiment were dissatisfied, and refused to serve under Spencer. They requested that the regiment should be dissolved, and that they should be distributed among the regiments of the States to which they respectively belonged. Malcom's regiment was one of the sixteen *Additional Regiments* appointed in the spring of 1777. They had never been completed, and by the arrangements of the present year they were thrown into disorder. General Washington wrote to Congress concerning them as follows.

"The situation of the sixteen Additional Regiments has been all along

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 3 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am honored with your favor of the 25th of last month. The readiness, with which you comply with all my requests in prosecution of the public service, has a claim to my warmest acknowledgments. I am glad to hear of the measures the State has taken for raising a thousand men, and of your expectation that the number would be soon completed. I hope the intelligence from Colonel Cantine will not materially retard the progress of a business, on which the general security of the frontier so much depends.

In a letter I have lately received from Mr. Duane, in behalf of the delegates of New York, he transmitted a packet received from you on the subject of frontier prisoners, under an idea that the general direction of prisoners was in my hands. There is a misconception in this, for I have never had any thing to do with any but military prisoners. The exchange of inhabitants has generally rested with the States to which they belonged. So far as these are concerned, therefore, I

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the most disagreeable that can be imagined. They have been destitute of every advantage the other troops have enjoyed. The resignations, from the extreme necessities of the officers, have been numerous, and the spirit of resigning is now become almost universal. Every expedient, that could operate upon their hopes, their patriotism, or their honor, has been exhausted. The regiments, for want of a sufficient number of officers, and for want of zeal in the few that remain, are dwindling to nothing. Several of these, gentlemen of sentiment and much attached to the service, lately waited upon me to represent their case. They stated their sufferings in terms the most affecting, and supported by facts that could not be questioned. Their expressions of regret, at finding themselves obliged to quit the army, had every appearance of genuineness. I prevailed upon them with great difficulty to suspend their determination a little longer, to see whether some measures would not be adopted in their favor." — *June 27th.*

consider them out of my province. With respect to military prisoners, under which description I comprehend all the officers and soldiers of the Continental army, and of the militia when taken in actual service, I shall be ready to concur with your Excellency in exchanging any such as may be in possession of the parties. In this, as to the officers, I must for the present confine myself to those taken on both sides on the frontier, according to the principle of equality of rank. When this is done, if any officers of ours remain in their hands, they must wait, till, in the rotation of exchanges and in the order of capture, it shall come to their turn to be exchanged. I observe by the list, that there are very few on either side. It will be agreeable to me, that such as cannot be exchanged on this plan shall be mutually released on parole. The enemy appear to have no privates of ours in their hands, so that no exchange can take place with regard to them. If they had any, we would very readily exchange; but I have made it a maxim, for obvious reasons, not to confound military prisoners and inhabitants, and consequently not to exchange them for each other.

Dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 4 May, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I have generally been so happy as to agree with your Excellency in sentiment on public measures; but an instance now occurs, in which there happens to be a difference of opinion. I am extremely apprehensive that very disagreeable consequences may result from an increase of the standing pay of the militia. It would

create an additional cause of discontent to the soldiery, who would naturally draw a comparison between their situation and that of the militia, and would think it very hard and unjust, that these should receive for temporary services a greater reward than they for permanent ones. This would occasion disgust and desertion, if not mutiny, among those already in the army, and would be a new discouragement to others from entering into it. The only remedy would be, to augment the pay of the soldiery to an equal sum, and the like must be done in the other States for their militia. The addition of public expense would then be excessive; and the decay of our credit and currency proportional.

Your Excellency will agree with me, that every step should be carefully avoided, which has a tendency to dissatisfy the army, already too little pleased with its condition, and to weaken our military establishment already too feeble, and requiring every prop our circumstances will afford to keep it from falling into ruin. I should imagine the militia of the country are to be drawn out by the authority of the government, rather than by the pecuniary reward attached to their service; if the former is not sufficient, the latter, I apprehend, will be found ineffectual. To make the compensation given to the militia an inducement of material weight, it must be raised so high, as to bear a proportion to what they might obtain by their labor in their civil occupations; and in our case to do this, it must be raised so high as, I fear, to exceed the utmost stretch of our finances. But if it is thought indispensable to increase the emoluments of service, in order to bring out the militia, it will be best to do it by a bounty rather than a fixed monthly pay. This would not be quite so palpable, nor strike the minds of the army with the same degree of force. But even this is a delicate

point; and I have uniformly thought the large bounties, which have been given in State enlistments and to the militia, have been a very fertile source of evils and an almost irreparable injury to the service.

I have taken the liberty to communicate my sentiments on this subject with great freedom to your Excellency, as it appears to me a matter of extreme importance; and as I have the most entire confidence in your candor and friendship. If my objections do not appear valid, you will at least ascribe them to their proper motives. I shall, agreeably to your Excellency's wish, continue the troops or the principal part of them at their present stations, as long as it can be done without interfering with the main object. With every sentiment of regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 5 May, 1779.

SIR,

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency three New York papers. The last contains extracts from Lord North's speech at opening the budget, which seems to breathe a vigorous prosecution of the war.* I have thought appearances for some time past wore this complexion. The English papers have frequently announced considerable reinforcements to the army in America, and have even specified the particular corps intended to be sent over. Nor can I see any sufficient reason to believe this will not be done. While the government can procure money, men will

* For some interesting facts respecting Lord North, and extracts from letters written to him by the King at different times on American affairs, see APPENDIX, No. V.

not be wanting; and while the nation is unengaged in a continental war in Europe, and can maintain a balance of naval power, I do not perceive why it should not be able to spare men to continue the war in this country. At least the probability that they will be able to do it is great enough to demand very vigorous efforts on our part, to put the army upon a much more respectable footing than it now is. It does not really appear to me, that adequate exertions are making in the several States to complete their battalions. I hope this may not proceed in part from the expectation of peace having taken too deep a root of late in this country.

I beg leave to submit it to Congress, whether a private, pointed address on this subject from them to the respective legislatures may not be productive of a good effect. I imagine it is unnecessary for me to particularize the situation of the army in the present reduced state of the regiments, after we shall have made the large detachment, which will be indispensable for the western expedition, and considering that all the Virginia levies are of necessity to be sent to the southward. I doubt not they are convinced it is such, as to demand the most serious exertions to make it better. With the greatest respect and esteem, I am, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 8 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have delayed acknowledging the receipt of your favor of the 1st, in expectation that it would soon be followed by an official one, which would enable me to take final measures on the subject of the trial. The explanation, with which you have obliged me, gives me

pleasure, in the same proportion as the disagreeable inferences I had drawn gave me pain. It wounds me sensibly to see appearances of any distrust of my equal attention to the security and welfare of the different States. My ardent desire to cultivate mutual confidence and harmony with every one will always make me glad to find any apprehensions ill-founded, which I may entertain on this delicate subject.

I am also happy to find it is your opinion, that the footing on which General Arnold's trial is now put will be agreeable. If the Council think the needful testimony can be ready by the 1st of June, it will come on then. As I do not hear from them, and time is slipping away fast, I enclose a letter to General Arnold, fixing the trial on that day; which you will be pleased to cause to be delivered to him, in case it corresponds with the sense of the Council; otherwise it is to be returned to me. But at all events I beg you will press a decision, as General Arnold has again signified his anxious desire to me, that the trial might be brought on; and, the sooner it is, the more convenient it will be to our military arrangements. Speaking of witnesses, you say, "Congress have declined exercising any compulsory power over their officers on the occasion." Where any persons in the military line are summoned, as I mentioned in my letter to the Council, it is my duty to order their attendance, which I shall of course do. With respect to these, therefore, the interposition of Congress would be unnecessary. With very great regard and esteem, dear Sir, I am, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 8 May, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Monsieur Gerard did me the honor to deliver me your favor of the 26th. I shall always feel obliged to you, my dear Sir, for a free communication of your sentiments, on whatsoever subject may occur. The objects of your letter were important. M. Gerard, I dare say, has made it unnecessary for me to recapitulate what passed between him and myself, and has informed you of the alternative I proposed for improving the important event announced by him. From what he told me, it appears, that sufficient assurances cannot be given of points, which are essential to justify the great undertaking you had in view,* at the expense of other operations very interesting; and, indeed, though I was desirous to convince the minister, that we are willing to make every effort in our power for striking a decisive blow, yet my judgment rather inclined to the second plan, as promising more certain success without putting so much to hazard. The relief of the southern States appears to me an object of the greatest magnitude, and one that may lead to still more important advantages. I feel infinite anxiety on their account. Their internal weakness, disaffection, the want of energy, the general languor that has seized the people at large, make me apprehend the most serious consequences. It would seem, too, as if the enemy meant to transfer the principal weight of the war that way. If it be true, that a large detachment has lately sailed from New York, and that Sir Henry Clinton is gone with it, in which several accounts I have

* An attack upon New York.

received agree, (though I do not credit the latter,) and these should be destined for the southward, as is most probable, there can be little doubt, that this is the present plan. Charleston, it is likely, will feel the next stroke. This, if it succeeds, will leave the enemy in full possession of Georgia, by obliging us to collect our forces for the defence of South Carolina, and will, consequently, open new sources for men and supplies, and prepare the way for a further career. The climate I am aware is an obstacle, but perhaps not so great as is imagined; and, when we consider the difference in our respective means of preserving health, it may possibly be found more adverse to our troops than to theirs. In this critical situation, I hardly know any resource we have, unless it be in the event expected;* and the supposed reinforcement now on its way,† for want of a competent land force on our part, may make even this dependence precarious. If it should fail, our affairs, which have a very sickly aspect in many respects, will receive a stroke they are little able to bear.

As a variety of accidents may disappoint our hopes here, it is indispensable that we should make every exertion on our part to check the enemy's progress. This cannot be done to effect, if our reliance is solely or principally on militia; for a force continually fluctuating is incapable of any material effort. The States concerned ought by all means to endeavour to draw out men for a length of time. A smaller number, on this plan, would answer their purpose better; a great deal of expense would be avoided, and agriculture would be much less impeded. It is to be lamented, that the remoteness and weakness of this army would make it folly to attempt to send any succour from this quarter.

* The arrival of Count d'Estaing's fleet.

† That is, a reinforcement of British troops from England.

Perhaps, from want of knowing the true state of our foreign expectations and prospects of finance, I may be led to contemplate the gloomy side of things; but I confess they appear to me to be in a very disagreeable train. The rapid decay of our currency, the extinction of public spirit, the increasing rapacity of the times, the want of harmony in our councils, the declining zeal of the people, the discontents and distresses of the officers of the army, and I may add, the prevailing security and insensibility to danger, are symptoms, in my eye, of a most alarming nature. If the enemy have it in their power to press us hard this campaign, I know not what may be the consequence. Our army, as it now stands, is but little more than the skeleton of an army; and I hear of no steps that are taking to give it strength and substance. I hope there may not be great mistakes on this head, and that our abilities in general are not overrated. The applications for succour are numerous, but no pains are taken to put it in my power to afford it. When I endeavour to draw together the Continental troops for the most essential purposes, I am embarrassed with complaints of the exhausted, defenceless situation of particular States, and find myself obliged, either to resist solicitations, made in such a manner and with such a degree of emphasis as scarcely to leave me a choice, or to sacrifice the most obvious principles of military propriety and risk the general safety. I shall conclude by observing, that it is well worthy the ambition of a patriot statesman at this juncture, to endeavour to pacify party differences, to give fresh vigor to the springs of government, to inspire the people with confidence, and above all to restore the credit of our currency.* I am, dear Sir, &c.

* Mr. Morris wrote a few months afterwards a series of able essays on the finances of the United States, which were first published in the

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MAXWELL.

Head-Quarters, 10 May, 1779.

SIR,

The short stay you made at head-quarters, and my attention being otherwise engrossed, prevented my entering upon the subject of the letter from the officers of the first New Jersey regiment, transmitted in yours of the 9th instant. I am sorry to find the gentlemen persist in the principles, which dictated the step they have taken; as, the more the affair unfolds itself, the more reason I see to disapprove it. But in the present view they have of the matter, and with their present feelings, it is not probable any new argument, that could be offered, would have more influence than the former. While therefore the gentlemen continue in the execution of their duty, as they declare themselves heartily disposed to do, I shall only regret that they have taken a step, of which they must hereafter see the impropriety.*

Pennsylvania Packet. An analysis of these papers is contained in Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. I. p. 218.

General Washington expressed himself in a strain similar to the above, in writing to another friend; — "I never was, and much less reason have I now to be, afraid of the enemy's arms; but I have no scruple in declaring to you, that I have never yet seen the time in which our affairs, in my opinion, were at so low an ebb as at the present; and, without a speedy and capital change, we shall not be able in a very short time to call out the strength and resources of the country. The hour is certainly come, when party disputes and dissensions should subside, when every man, especially those in office, should with hand and heart pull the same way, and with their whole strength. Providence has done, and I am persuaded is disposed to do, a great deal for us; but we are not to forget the fable of Jupiter and the countryman." — *May 18th.*

* The officers of the New Jersey brigade, after they were under orders to march, as a part of the western expedition against the Indians, sent a memorial to the legislature of the State then sitting at Trenton, clothed in very strong language, and demanding some equitable provision for the officers and men within three days. The legislature was embar

There is one thing to which I cannot forbear calling your particular attention. I observe in the memorial, of which you have sent me a copy, that the gentlemen concerned dwell among other things upon the insufficiency of the soldiers' pay. This is a doctrine full of dangerous consequences, and which ought not to be countenanced in any way whatever. Neither is it well founded. All that the common soldiery of any country can expect is food and clothing. The pay given in other armies is little more than nominal, very low in the first instance, and subject to a variety of deductions, that reduce it to nothing. This is the case with the British troops; though I believe they receive more than those of any other state in Europe. The idea of maintaining the families of the soldiers at the public expense is peculiar to us, and is incompatible with the finances of any government. Our troops have been uniformly better fed than any others. They are at this time very well clad, and probably will continue to be so. While this is the case, they will have no just cause of complaint. It is important that any misconception on this point should be rectified. I suppose every officer incapable of encouraging improper expectations in his men, but I must also hope, that every exertion will be made to suppress them. I am, &c.

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rassed with the application in this form, as it assumed the air of menace, and some of the members said they would sooner see the brigade disbanded, than yield to demands thus presented, however reasonable in themselves. To get over the difficulty, they hit upon the expedient of persuading the officers to withdraw the memorial, with the understanding that the legislature would instantly take the subject into consideration. In a few hours, ample resolves were passed by both houses, granting nearly all that the memorial required. Two hundred pounds were ordered to be given to each commissioned officer, and forty dollars to each soldier, to enable them to pay their debts and prepare for the campaign. The money was immediately forwarded to the brigade at Elizabethtown. — *Lord Stirling's MS. Letter, May 10th.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 11 May, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency copies of letters and papers, which have passed on the subject of a late remonstrance from the officers of the first New Jersey regiment to the Assembly of their State. This is an affair which Congress will no doubt view in a very serious light. To me it appears truly alarming. It shows what is to be apprehended, if some adequate provision is not generally made for the officers. I have frequently taken the liberty to suggest my sentiments as to what ought to be done. The subject was particularly discussed in my late interview with the committee of conference. A repetition would be needless. I shall only observe, that the distresses in some corps are so great, either where they were not till lately attached to particular States, or where the States have been less provident, that officers have solicited even to be supplied with the clothing destined for the common soldiery. Coarse and unsuitable as they were, I had not power to comply with the request. The patience of men, animated by a sense of duty and honor, will support them to a certain point, beyond which it will not go. I doubt not Congress will be sensible of the danger of an extreme in this respect, and will pardon my anxiety to obviate it.

I view the conduct of the officers concerned in the present instance as highly blamable, and I have signified my disapprobation. I trust the mode will not be thought too mild, when our situation is considered. The causes of discontent are too great and too general, and the ties that bind the officers to the service too feeble, to admit of rigor. Their letter to me, in which

they undertake to justify their conduct, was peculiarly embarrassing. I thought it best to take no direct notice of it, because I must either have done too much for our circumstances, or too little for the nature of the proceeding. I contented myself with writing the letter to General Maxwell. I have this moment received information, that the Assembly have made some provision for their troops. It seems there was a compromise upon the occasion. The officers withdrew their remonstrance, and the Assembly went into the business. It is lamentable, that the measure should have been delayed till it became in a manner extorted. Notwithstanding the expedient adopted for saving appearances, this cannot fail to operate as a bad precedent.

Congress will be pleased to accept my thanks for the assistance they offer in the article of specie for secret services, which I shall draw for as occasion may require. With the help of this necessary article, good intelligence might be obtained, were not the channel obstructed by a too cautious policy in the States. To enable our correspondents among the enemy to convey their intelligence, we are often obliged to make use of ambiguous characters as the vehicles, and to permit them to carry on some traffic, both as an encouragement and a cover to their mission. There have been instances of prosecutions in the civil courts against these people; and, in order to screen them from punishment, we have been under a necessity of discovering their occupation. This has served to deter others from acting in the same capacity, and to increase the dread of detection in our confidential friends.* I am, &c.

* General Washington always had spies in New York, who were unacquainted with each other, and whose intelligence came through different channels. By comparing their accounts he was commonly well informed of all the enemy's movements, and was able to judge with

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 17 May, 1779.

SIR,

The fleet mentioned in Governor Johnson's letter may contain the detachment, which lately sailed from New York; and the object may be, if not to rescue, at least to facilitate the desertion of the convention troops. This is the prevailing opinion in New York, countenanced among other circumstances by the Goodriches and others, natives of Virginia, being of the party. A rescue, with common prudence on our side, would be difficult. I hope this will not be wanting, but it may be no easy matter to prevent very considerable desertion. The enemy may possibly take some convenient and secure post to afford opportunities. Our obvious policy on an emergency will be to remove the troops, perhaps to divide them.

But the present appearance may be only a diversion, to delay the reinforcements going from Virginia to the

considerable accuracy what plans they had in contemplation. One individual was occupied in this way nearly the whole war. His letters were full, and the information he communicated was usually correct. He was on terms of intimacy with the British officers, and frequently obtained his intelligence from the highest sources. His letters were sent by way of Long Island, and thence across the Sound to Connecticut. At one period he had an agent in Bergen, through whose hands his letters passed. The principal officers near the lines were also entrusted with the business of procuring intelligence, and employed spies for that purpose, whose reports were transmitted to the Commander-in-chief. Various devices were practised for concealment. A cipher was used in part, but the most effectual mode was to write with an invisible ink, which could be made to appear only by rubbing over the surface of the paper a chemical fluid, prepared in a particular manner. The spies were supplied with this ink and fluid. A short letter would be written on some trivial subject with common ink, and the remainder of the sheet would be filled with invisible characters. Fictitious names were used for the signatures and superscriptions. With these precautions, the risk of detection was very small, even if the letter was intercepted.

southward, while the detachment may in reality have proceeded on its voyage to prosecute the intended operations in that quarter. In this case, the vessels that have been seen may have a few troops on board, the better to cover the artifice, and, it may be, will call at particular places, which have been preconcerted, to receive deserters instructed to meet them there. We should be upon our guard against a deception of this kind, which may unnecessarily detain the levies to the injury of our southern affairs. In the present uncertainty, and at this distance, it is hard to form any precise opinion of what ought to be done. I would only beg leave to observe, that the arms destined for the levies should be hastened forward to them, that they may be enabled to act according to circumstances, and that if appearances continue, without producing any thing decisive, the convention troops ought to be effectually taken care of, and every provision made, that the levies may not be improperly detained.*

* The convention troops were the cause of much trouble on various accounts, as will be seen by an extract from a letter written by Washington to Benjamin Harrison; — "No man, in the early part of this war, wished more than I did to soften the hardships of captivity, by seeing the enemy's officers (prisoners with us) treated with every mark of humanity, civility, and respect. But we have witnessed such invariable proofs of ungrateful returns, from an opinion that all our civilities are the result of fear; such incessant endeavours, in spite of all their paroles, to poison the minds of those around them; such arts and address to accomplish this, by magnifying the power of Great Britain to some, her favorable disposition to others, and combining the two arguments to a third set, that I cannot help looking upon them as dangerous guests in our country, and apprehending a good deal from the hospitality and unsuspicious temper of my countrymen. The more they are indulged, the more indulgences they will require, and the more pernicious they will grow under them; and I am much mistaken if those, who pay most attention to them, do not find the greatest cause for repentance. I view General Phillips in the light of a dangerous man. In his march to Charlottesville, he was guilty of a very great breach of military propriety; nay, of a procedure highly criminal; for, instead of pursuing the

The detachment, which sailed from New York, according to the best information I have received, consists of one battalion of guards, Lord Rawdon's corps, the forty-second Highlanders, a German regiment, and fifty Bucks county dragoons, estimated at about two thousand men. They were convoyed by the Raisonable of sixty-four, the Rainbow of forty-four guns, and a small frigate. There remain now at New York two frigates of twenty guns, two sloops of war, and a few privateers, which is all the protection there is to a large number of transports. If our frigates to the eastward could be speedily collected, I should hope a very important blow

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route pointed out to him, namely, the one by which the troops of the Convention marched, through Leesburg and Orange, he struck down to Georgetown in Maryland, from thence went by water to Alexandria, taking, as I am told, the soundings of the river as he went, and from thence to Fredericksburg. True it is, that the officer, who conducted him, was more culpable than he; but upon inquiry it is found, that this officer is a person over whom I have no control, as he is a prisoner of theirs. I only mention these things in proof of the necessity of keeping a watchful eye upon these officers. And let me add, if you think you gain by the apparent desertion of the men, I can assure you that you are deceived. We are every day apprehending these people in their attempts to get into New York. In a word, I had such grounds to suspect, that, under pretence of desertion, numbers of them intended to get into New York, that I was induced to march parallel with them as they passed through the States of New York and Jersey, and post guards at proper places to intercept them; notwithstanding which, numbers, aided by the Tories, who kept them concealed in the mountains and obscure places, effected a junction with the enemy in the city. Above all things, suffer them not to engage in your service as soldiers; for, as surely as they do, so surely will they rob you of your bounty and arms, and more than probably carry a man or two along with them to the enemy." — *May 5th.*

It is curious, that on one point the British minister should speak in almost precisely the same language as General Washington, though with an opposite application. Lord George Germain said, in writing to General Clinton, "The rebels have hitherto made the most ungrateful returns for that lenity, which from principles of humanity has been too indiscriminately shown towards them, and, instead of being grateful for indulgences, they have always imputed lenity to fear, and the remission of punishment to the dread of retaliation." — *November 9th*, 1780.

might be struck there without much risk. It seems to be well worth the experiment. If Congress view the matter in the same light, they will no doubt give the necessary directions with all possible secrecy and despatch. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MONSIEUR GERARD.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 18 May, 1779.

SIR,

The obligation I felt for the visit, which your Excellency did me the honor to make to me, could only be increased by the manner in which you are pleased to mention the reception you met with. If there was any thing that deserved to give you pleasure, it was the sentiments, which accompanied the marks of respect we were happy to have an opportunity of showing you. As the minister of a Prince we revere, you had a title to every thing we could do; but you have another title not less precious to your sensibility. All the true friends of America esteem it an honor to rank you among their number, and acknowledge the distinguished instances you have given of your zealous concern for its interests. The assurances of your esteem for me are too flattering to permit any other return, than that of actions; and I shall ardently wish for occasions of giving you proofs of mine, as convincing as they will be sincere. Truly sensible of your politeness, Mrs. Washington entreats you to accept her most respectful thanks and compliments. I have the honor to be, with perfect respect and the truest personal attachment, your Excellency's, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 20 May, 1779.

SIR,

A few days since I was honored with your favor of the 8th instant. It is my constant endeavour to cultivate the confidence of the governments of the several States, by an equal and uniform attention to their respective interests, so far as falls within the line of my duty and the compass of the means with which I am entrusted. While I have a consciousness of this, it is natural my sensibility should be affected even by the appearance of distrust. The assurances of the Council, that I have misconceived their former letters, affords me pleasure proportioned to the pain which that misconception occasioned. I shall not at present trouble them with any remarks on the subject discussed in their last, respecting the degree of protection, which each State has a right to expect. I shall only beg leave to assure them, that I do full justice to the exertions of the State of Pennsylvania, and to express my hope, that, if circumstances will permit the execution of the immediate and ultimate projects of the campaign, effectual relief will be given to our frontier in general. This is a favorite object with me, and nothing but necessity or more decisive prospects elsewhere will divert me from it.

If the Independent Companies raising shall amount to the number the Council mention, they will answer my expectation of succour from the State, and will make it unnecessary to call out immediately a body of militia. I shall only entreat, that measures may be taken to have them as speedily as possible at the place of rendezvous, Sunbury or Wyoming, where they will receive orders from General Sullivan, who commands the

expedition. I am happy to find that General Arnold's trial is now put upon a satisfactory footing, and I regret that any misapprehension has happened. I shall endeavour to have the affair conducted in its future progress with unexceptionable propriety. The period now fixed for entering upon it relieves me from much embarrassment. I beg the Council to accept my warmest thanks for the favorable sentiments of my conduct, which they do me the honor in this new instance to express, and I entreat them to be assured of the perfect respect and esteem, with which I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 25 May, 1779.

SIR,

The predatory war, which the enemy now seem resolved to carry on, will be very distressing. Little aid can be afforded from the army in its present situation, and the militia appear too ill provided with arms to defend themselves. How this can be remedied, and the army supplied, I know not. But it ought to be an essential object of policy with the particular States, to put their militia on a respectable footing, and under such regulations as will enable them to assemble with rapidity on sudden emergencies. I enclose a copy of my instructions to General Scott on the present occasion, that Congress may know what they are and judge of their propriety. It appears to me, that a reinforcement to the southern army is an indispensable object;*

* The British had recently sent a detachment of several ships and twenty-five hundred men into the Chesapeake, destroyed a large number of small vessels, sacked the town of Portsmouth, burnt Suffolk, and carried on board a large quantity of tobacco and other plunder, and many

at the same time I thought it ineligible to make my directions on this head more positive than they are, as it is impossible to determine absolutely what the exigency of affairs in Virginia may require.

By intelligence through different channels from New York, it would seem as if the enemy there have some important enterprise in contemplation. They have been drawing all their force to a point, and have collected a number of boats at Kingsbridge, which are so prepared as to indicate an attempt that requires secrecy and silence. The appearances are strong, and make it necessary that we should be upon our guard; though they may only be calculated for demonstration, perhaps to divert and detain the force we are sending on the western service. We are somewhat embarrassed on the score of wagons. The preparations for the Indian expedition have retarded those for moving this army. I hope we shall shortly be relieved. I am, &c.

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negroes. General Scott was in Virginia, recruiting his regiment to join General Lincoln in Carolina. The legislature of Virginia had requested him to remain there for the defence of the State; but Washington expressed his decided opinion, that he ought to proceed with all expedition to the South, believing the danger from the enemy much greater in Carolina than Virginia, and presuming the incursion in the Chesapeake to be only for a temporary object; which proved to be correct, as the enemy retired in a few days and returned to New York.

In writing to his brother on this subject, General Washington said, "I am very sorry to hear, that the plunder taken from Virginia, by the detachment commanded by General Mathews, was so immense. It is, however, some consolation and indeed pleasure to hear, that a large part of it belonged to speculators. I am equally concerned to hear, that they have done this without opposition. Their own papers boast of the destruction, and consequent injury to us, without the loss of a single man. This does not reflect much honor upon the spirit of my countrymen. They might, they ought to have bestowed a few guns, if no more, upon the party that moved to Suffolk. Riches, so easily and cheaply purchased, will be a powerful inducement to another visit." — *June 20th.*

TO ARCHIBALD CARY.

Head-Quarters, 30 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I very sincerely lament that the situation of our service will not permit us to do justice to the merits of Major Monroe, who will deliver you this, by placing him in the army upon some satisfactory footing. But, as he is on the point of leaving us and expresses an intention of going to the southward, where a new scene has opened, it is with pleasure I take occasion to express to you the high opinion I have of his worth. The zeal he discovered by entering the service at an early period, the character he supported in his regiment, and the manner in which he distinguished himself at Trenton, where he received a wound, induced me to appoint him to a captaincy in one of the additional regiments. This regiment failing from the difficulty of recruiting, he entered into Lord Stirling's family, and has served two campaigns as a volunteer aid to his Lordship. He has, in every instance, maintained the reputation of a brave, active, and sensible officer. As we cannot introduce him into the Continental line, it were to be wished that the State could do something for him, to enable him to follow the bent of his military inclination, and render service to his country. If an event of this kind could take place, it would give me particular pleasure; as the esteem I have for him, and a regard to his merit, conspire to make me earnestly wish to see him provided for in some handsome way. I am, &c.*

* Major Monroe afterwards became President of the United States. In a letter to Lord Stirling, written at Richmond several months after he had retired from the milltary line, he expressed himself as follows. "Believe me, I have been always happy to hear from you. For my part, till very lately, I have been a recluse. Chagrined at my disappointment with your

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, 31 May, 1779.

SIR,

The expedition you are appointed to command is to be directed against the hostile tribes of the Six Nations of Indians, with their associates and adherents. The immediate objects are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements, and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. The troops to be employed under your command are Clinton's, Maxwell's, Poor's and Hand's brigades, and the Independent Companies raised in the State of Pennsylvania. In Hand's brigade I comprehend all the detached corps of Continental troops now on the Susquehanna, and Spencer's regiment. Cortlandt's I consider as belonging to Clinton's brigade; Alden's may go to Poor's, and Butler's and the rifle corps to Maxwell's or Hand's.

Clinton's brigade, you are informed, has been ordered to rendezvous at Canajoharie, subject to your orders, either to form a junction with the main body on the Susquehanna, by the way of Otsego, or to proceed up the Mohawk River and coöperate in the best manner circumstances will permit, as you judge most advisable. So soon as your preparations are in sufficient forward-

State in not attaining the rank and command I ought, and chagrined at some disappointment in a private line, I retired from society with almost a resolution not to enter into it again. Being fond of study I submitted the direction of my time and plan to my friend Mr. Jefferson, one of our wisest and most virtuous republicans, and under his direction, and aided by his advice, I have hitherto till of late lived. Lately I have taken a part in the civil line of the State, and have been elected into the legislature, and afterwards by the legislature into the Executive Council of the State, which latter office I at present fill. I am happy to make my acknowledgments to your Lordship and to General Washington for your and his friendly letters to this State, in favor of my conduct while in your family, and without which I could not have expected among so many competitors, at my age, to attain in this degree the confidence of my countrymen."— *September 10th*, 1782.

ness, you will assemble your main body at Wyoming, and proceed thence to Tioga, taking from that place the most direct and practicable route into the heart of the Indian settlements. You will establish such intermediate posts, as you think necessary for the security of your communication and convoys; nor need I caution you, while you leave a sufficiency of men for their defence, to take care to diminish your operating force as little as possible. A post at Tioga will be particularly necessary, either a stockade fort, or an intrenched camp; if the latter, a block-house should be erected in the interior. I would recommend that some post in the centre of the Indian country, should be occupied with all expedition, with a sufficient quantity of provision; whence parties should be detached to lay waste all the settlements around, with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner, that the country may not be merely overrun, but destroyed.

I beg leave to suggest, as general rules that ought to govern your operations, to make rather than receive attacks, attended with as much impetuosity, shouting, and noise, as possible; and to make the troops act in as loose and dispersed a way as is consistent with a proper degree of government, concert, and mutual support. It should be previously impressed upon the minds of the men, whenever they have an opportunity, to rush on with the war-whoop and fixed bayonet. Nothing will disconcert and terrify the Indians more than this.

After you have very thoroughly completed the destruction of their settlements, if the Indians should show a disposition for peace, I would have you encourage it, on condition that they will give some decisive evidence of their sincerity, by delivering up some of the principal instigators of their past hostility into

our hands; Butler, Brant, the most mischievous of the Tories, that have joined them, or any others they may have in their power, that we are interested to get into ours. They may possibly be engaged, by address, secrecy, and stratagem, to surprise the garrison of Niagara, and the shipping on the Lakes, and put them into our possession. This may be demanded, as a condition of our friendship, and would be a most important point gained. If they can render a service of this kind, you may stipulate to assist them in their distress with supplies of provisions and other articles of which they will stand in need; having regard, in the expectations you give them, to our real abilities to perform. I have no power at present to authorize you to conclude a treaty of peace with them, but you may agree upon the terms of one, letting them know that it must be finally ratified by Congress, and giving them every proper assurance that it will.

When we have effectually chastised them, we may then listen to propositions for peace, and endeavour to draw further advantages from their fears. But, even in this case, great caution will be necessary to guard against the snares, which their treachery may hold out. They must be explicit in their promises, give substantial pledges for their performance, and execute their engagements with decision and despatch. Hostages are the only kind of security to be depended on. When you have completed the objects of your expedition, unless otherwise directed in the mean time, you will return to form a junction with the main army, by the most convenient, expeditious, and secure route, according to circumstances. The route by the Mohawk River, if it can be pursued without too great a risk, will perhaps be most eligible on several accounts. Much should depend on the relative position of the main army at the time. Relying perfectly up-

on your judgment, prudence, and activity, I have the highest expectation of success equal to our wishes; and I beg leave to assure you, that I anticipate with great pleasure the honor, which will redound to yourself, and the advantage to the common cause, from a happy termination of this important enterprise.

TO THE MINISTERS, ELDERS, AND DEACONS OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AT RARITON.

Camp, Middlebrook, 2 June, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

To meet the approbation of good men cannot but be agreeable. Your affectionate expressions make it still more so. In quartering an army, and in supplying its wants, distress and inconvenience will often occur to the citizen. I feel myself happy in a consciousness that these have been strictly limited by necessity, and in your opinion of my attention to the rights of my fellow citizens. I thank you, Gentlemen, sincerely for the sense you entertain of the conduct of the army, and for the interest you take in my welfare. I trust the goodness of the cause and the exertions of the people, under Divine protection, will give us that honorable peace for which we are contending. Suffer me, Gentlemen, to wish the Reformed Church at Rariton a long continuance of its present minister and consistory, and all the blessings which flow from piety and religion. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 3 June, 1779.

SIR,

In the letter, which I did myself the honor to write to your Excellency on the 25th of May, I mentioned

the appearances which indicated that the enemy had some important enterprise in contemplation. These appearances have since increased, till they seem to have arrived at a very interesting crisis. The enclosed extracts from the intelligence I have successively received will show their progress, and the point at which they last stood. Congress will observe, by General St. Clair's letter, that he expected to reach Pompton last night. The Virginia division, commanded by Lord Stirling, marched yesterday for the same place. Baron de Kalb, with the Maryland troops, follows this morning. We shall press forward with all diligence, and do every thing in our power to disappoint the enemy. I expect to set out this day towards the Highlands, by way of Morristown. I mention the route, that any despatces coming from Congress may the more readily find me. There are five brigades of Continental troops, besides the two Carolina regiments, under the command of General McDougall.

At the first appearance of a movement among the enemy, I redoubled my efforts to put the army here in a state of readiness for taking the field. These have been seconded by the utmost exertions of the quarter-master-general; but the very great difficulty of procuring horses and wagons, and the scarcity of forage, have unavoidably retarded our preparations. I beg leave to enclose an extract of a letter I have just received from General Gates, on the very important subject of money. I entreat that Congress will be pleased to order him an immediate and adequate supply, as the necessity is urgent and it would be dangerous to risk a revival of the discontent, which lately appeared among the troops at Providence for want of pay. It is also much to be desired, that he may be enabled to reënlist the men he mentions during the war. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Ringwood Iron-Works, 6 June, 1779.

SIR,

I am now to inform you, according to the advices I have obtained, that, on the 1st instant in the morning, the enemy opened a battery at Stony Point, which lies on the west side of the Hudson at the landing at King's Ferry, against a small detached work at Verplanck's Point, on the east side, and kept up a constant fire upon it, in conjunction with their ships, till four in the afternoon, when the party stationed in it, finding that it was also invested on the land side in force, surrendered by capitulation.* The next day, that part of the enemy, which was landed on the east side of the river, computed at five thousand, advanced to the Bald Hill below the Continental Village, when it was expected that they meant to attack our troops in that quarter and to gain, if possible, Nelson's Point opposite to Fort Arnold,† while Sir Henry Clinton, with the remainder of the army, should proceed from Haverstraw Bay

* The enemy landed in two divisions, one on the east side of the river under General Vaughan, eight miles below Verplanck's Point, and the other on the west side three miles below Stony Point, where the garrison consisted of about forty men. They evacuated the post, as the enemy approached, on the 31st of May. Opposite to Stony Point was a small fort at Verplanck's Point, called Fort Lafayette. This was garrisoned by a company of seventy men, commanded by Captain Armstrong, who was compelled to surrender when attacked by the cannonade from Stony Point, and by General Vaughan's party on the other side. The following were the terms of the capitulation.

"*On the Glacis of Fort Lafayette, June* 1st, 1779. His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, and Commodore Sir George Collier, grant to the garrison of Fort Lafayette terms of safety to the persons and property (contained in the fort) of the garrison, they surrendering themselves prisoners of war. The officers shall be permitted to wear their side-arms.

"JOHN ANDRÉ, *Aid-de-camp.*"

† Fort Arnold was at West Point.

against the fort, by the routes on the west side. This however was not attempted, and the body of the enemy, that appeared before the Village, returned, without making any attack, to the ground from which they had moved. The enemy have since remained in two divisions on the opposite sides of the river. Their vessels have generally fallen down a little below King's Ferry, and twelve square-rigged vessels, with eight of a smaller size and fifteen flat-boats, with troops on board, stood down the river yesterday, and were seen till they turned the Points, which form the upper part of Tappan Bay. The rest of the fleet (the whole of which is reported to have consisted of about seventy sail, great and small, and one hundred and fifty flat-boats) keep their station; and the body of troops on this side, from the latest advices, were very industriously employed yesterday in fortifying Stony Point, which, from its peninsular and commanding form, is naturally strong, and which, from the narrowness of the neck, that connects it to the main land, may be insulated and maintained without any very great difficulty. This, Sir, is a summary of the intelligence, and of the situation of the enemy.*

* Sir Henry Clinton, who commanded this expedition in person, was not entirely satisfied at the present juncture with the instructions he received from the ministry, and the part he was made to act. In writing to Lord George Germain, after stating the numerous difficulties with which he had been obliged to contend, and hinting at the apparent want of confidence implied by the tenor of the instructions lately received, he goes on to say; — "Is it to be supposed, that I am not on the watch to profit by every favorable disposition in any part of the continent, or to improve every accidental advantage of circumstances? I am on the spot; the earliest and most exact intelligence on every point ought naturally to reach me. It is my interest, as well as my duty, more than any other person's living, to inform myself minutely and justly of the particular views, connexions, state, and temper of every province, nay, of every set of men within the limits of my command, and it is my business to mark every possible change in their situation. Why then, my Lord, without consulting

Their movements and conduct are very perplexing, and leave it difficult to determine what are their real objects. However, as the posts in the Highlands are of infinite consequence, and the point in which we can be most essentially injured, I shall take every measure in my power to provide for their security, and accordingly shall make such a disposition of the army as shall best promise to answer that end. If they should not

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me, will you admit the ill-digested or interested suggestions of people, who cannot be competent judges of the subject, and puzzle me by hinting wishes, with which I cannot agree, and yet am loath to disregard? For God's sake, my Lord, if you wish that I should do any thing, leave me to myself, and let me adapt my efforts to the hourly change of circumstances, and take the risk of my want of success. I do not wish to be captious, but I certainly have not had that attention paid to my wishes, and that satisfaction, which the weight of my situation, and the hopes which you held forth for me, gave me reason to expect." — *New York, May 22d.*

The persons here alluded to, as communicating "ill-digested and interested suggestions," were the refugees and late civil officers in the colonies, who had gone back to England. Through their friends in America, they received intelligence from every quarter, exaggerating the distresses of the people, the weak condition of Washington's army, the dissensions in Congress, and the exhausted state of the country. It was said, that the people were groaning under the tyranny of their leaders, and suffering an oppression, which they would not much longer endure. The prospects of the loyalists were painted in the most flattering colors, and nothing was wanting for the success of their cause, but perseverance on the part of the government, and a vigorous prosecution of the war. Promises were held out at different points, in Carolina, Virginia, and New England, that a respectable body of troops would give countenance to the loyalists, and draw together numerous concealed friends to the government, whose fears could be overcome only by such a substantial encouragement. These reports were carefully conveyed to the ministers, who lent to them a willing ear, and sent out instructions to Sir Henry Clinton, recommending attacks at different places, and thus deranging all the plans which he had formed, after having obtained the best knowledge of facts and circumstances. This delusion prevailed during the whole war. The ministers acted under a perpetual deception. In looking back upon events, as they actually occurred, it is impossible to conceive a collection of state papers more extraordinary for the erroneous impressions, contracted knowledge, and impracticable aims of the writer, than the correspondence of Lord George Germain with the British commanders in America.

operate against those posts, it would seem that one part of their expedition, and a principal one, is, by establishing garrisons, to cut off the communication by the way of King's Ferry. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Smith's Clove, 11 June, 1779

SIR,

The enemy's situation remains much the same as mentioned in mine of the 6th. One body of about five thousand men is on Verplanck's Point, and another of about one thousand men on Stony Point. They continue fortifying, and no doubt mean to keep possession of those posts. The natural strength of the ground, with very little help of art, will make them inaccessible to us in our present circumstances. The advantages of holding them will be important to the enemy, the inconveniences to us great. It is a step to further operations against the forts.* Our communication by King's Ferry, far the easiest, is at an end. The extent and difficulty of land transportation are considerably increased, a new resort and sanctuary afforded to the disaffected in these parts of the country, and a new door opened to draw supplies and to distress and corrupt the inhabitants. Reasons, which need not be explained, put it out of our power to prevent it beforehand or to remedy it now it has happened. We have taken post for the present with the main body of the army in this Clove, where we are as well situated, as we could be anywhere else, to succour the forts in case the future operations of the enemy should be directed against them.

* That is, the forts at West Point and in its environs.

The troops mentioned to have returned down the river on the 5th, are said to be principally the detachment that went to Virginia, which immediately on its arrival at New York had been hurried up the river, and is now gone back to repose. I devoutly wish a confirmation of the southern news, though I cannot but say my fears predominate, so much time having elapsed.* I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Head-Quarters, Smith's Clove, 11 June, 1779.

SIR,

I have duly received your two letters of the 25th and 30th of May, which the situation of affairs in this quarter prevented my acknowledging sooner. I can only lament, that your prospects of reinforcements are so unfavorable. The appearances are not better for the main army. It would almost seem, as if the States were determined to let our security depend entirely on a want of enterprise in the enemy.

With respect to my plans, the only offensive one I could have in contemplation independent on contingencies, has been announced to you; I mean the western expedition. Our defensive ones must depend on the movements of the enemy. I imagined you had too just an idea of the comparative state of their strength and ours, to make a particular explanation on this head necessary; but the opinion you express in your last, of the glorious opportunity of making an attack upon New York, shows that you must either greatly overrate our force, or undervalue that of the enemy. Indeed, you

* Alluding to intelligence of the successes of the American forces in Carolina, which proved to be premature.

are entirely mistaken in your estimate of the detachments, which have gone from New York since the 1st of October last, including that to Virginia, which has lately returned. They did not amount to much more than one half the number you mentioned; at the highest calculation they could not exceed nine thousand five hundred. The force then remaining at New York and its dependencies, by the lowest computation, was not less than nine thousand serviceable men. It is now eleven thousand. You will judge from this state of facts, whether the opportunity for attacking New York was a very glorious one or not.*

I am almost entirely in the dark, as to our foreign prospects, and can therefore give you no light on that head. I have little more for my own government, than newspaper intelligence, common report, and conjecture. Instantly on the receipt of yours of the 15th of May, I despatched an extract from it to Congress, and urged an immediate and competent supply of money. I agree with you, that a precedent of payment for deficiency of rations would be dangerous and very hard to get over.

You will have heard that the enemy have made a movement up the North River, and taken possession of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point. They are fortifying and seem determined to keep possession. It is judicious on their part, and will be productive of

* *From General Gates's Letter.* — "As it will be too late for any of the army with your Excellency to disappoint the enemy's immediate views in Virginia, a glorious opportunity at this instant presents itself for attacking New York with the fairest prospect of advantage; sixteen thousand of the enemy's troops having most undoubtedly been detached from that city since October last."— *Providence, May 30th.*

When General Sullivan left Providence to take command of the Indian expedition, General Gates removed his head-quarters to that place, and General Heath resumed the command in Boston.

advantages to them and inconveniences to us, which will be too obvious to you to need enumeration. They have about six thousand men in the two divisions. A part of those, who came up at first, have since returned to New York. An attempt to dislodge them, from the natural strength of the positions, would require a greater force and apparatus, than we are masters of. All we can do, is to lament what we cannot remedy, endeavour to prevent a further progress on the river, and make the advantages of what they have now gained as limited as possible. I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Head-Quarters, Smith's Clove, 21 June, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

On the 19th your favor of the 12th came to hand. I am sorry that you are likely to be disappointed in the Independent Companies expected from Pennsylvania, and that you have encountered greater difficulties than were looked for. I am satisfied, that every exertion in your power will be made, and I hope your eventual operations will be attended with fewer obstacles. I have had a conversation lately with Governor Clinton. He informs me, that, notwithstanding the interruption given, by the movement of the enemy up the river, a body of troops under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Pawling will still be ready for the proposed co-operation. Two hundred of these being engaged for a more permanent service, after effecting the first object, will meet General Clinton* at Anaquaga, and proceed with him to join you. It was the Governor's intention to conduct this business in person, but as the end may

* General James Clinton, who now commanded at Albany.

very well be answered by another, and as his presence here, to influence the militia on any emergency, may be essential, I have advised him to decline the command of the party. Lieutenant-Colonel Pawling is a very good officer. I have seen a letter from General Clinton to the Governor, in which he acknowledges having received one hundred and fifty of the one thousand new levies voted by the State for the service of the frontiers. The Governor tells me some more were on their way. You have part of Colonel Armand's corps and Captain McLane's company with you. As it is disagreeable to divide corps, and as the number of these is very inconsiderable, if you can with any convenience spare them, I should be glad if they could be sent back to join the remainder of the corps with this army. They may be employed as an escort to any thing you may have occasion to send back to Easton. If my calculation be right, except the Independent Companies, your force in other respects will exceed by some hundreds the original estimate.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.*

* Two days after the date of the above letter, General Washington removed his head-quarters to New Windsor, where he was more contiguous to the forts, and better situated to attend to different parts of the army on both sides of Hudson's River. The main body of the army was left at Smith's Clove under the command of General Putnam. The object now in view was to guard against an attack upon West Point. General McDougall was transferred to the command at that post. Three brigades were stationed on the east side of the river; Nixon's at Constitution Island; Parsons's opposite to West Point, with instructions to send fatigue parties daily across the river to assist in constructing the works; and Huntington's on the principal road leading to Fishkill. These three brigades were put under the command of General Heath, who had been recently ordered to repair from Boston to head-quarters.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE, PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF ARRANGEMENT.

Head-Quarters, New Windsor, 25 June, 1779.

SIR,

Mr. Beatty, commissary of prisoners, will furnish you with the names of a number of persons, officers and others, who were in captivity, and are alleged by the enemy to have deserted their paroles. He will also furnish you with the circumstances of their several escapes, as stated by the enemy and by themselves, corroborated by such testimonies as are in his possession. You will be pleased to take the whole matter into consideration, and favor me with your opinion on the following points.

Who of them are really to be considered as breakers of their parole? And who were military prisoners of war? No person is to be considered a military prisoner of war, who did not at the time of capture belong either to the army, or to the militia in *actual service.*

In determining these points, at the same time that I am persuaded you will do justice to the individuals, whose escapes were not inconsistent with their engagements, I am equally persuaded you will pay the fullest attention to the delicate nature of a parole, and will carefully discriminate those, who are chargeable with a breach of it. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* This letter relates to American prisoners, who had been taken by the British, and suffered to go home on parole, but who had not returned when their parole expired; or who, in other words, had broken their parole. This was such a violation of honor, and a military offence of so aggravated a character, that it was punished with severity. During the first years of the war, cases of this sort were common among the British officers, on the ground, that a parole from rebels was not binding. This subterfuge, however, was never countenanced by the British commanders and was soon discontinued.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.*

New Windsor, 27 June, 1779.

SIR,

Your letter of yesterday came safe to my hands, and by the dragoon, who was the bearer of it, I send you ten guineas for C——r.† His successor, of whose name I have no desire to be informed, provided his intelligence is good and seasonably transmitted, should endeavour to hit upon some certain mode of conveying his information quickly, for it is of little avail to be told of things after they have become matter of public notoriety and known to every body. This new agent should communicate his signature, and the private marks by which genuine papers are to be distinguished from counterfeits. There is a man on York Island, living near the North River, by the name of G. H. who, I am told, has given signal proofs of his attachment to us, and at the same time stands well with the enemy. If, upon inquiry, this is found to be the case, he will be a fit instrument to convey intelligence to me, while I am on the west side the North River, as he is enterprising and connected with people in Bergen county, who will assist in forming a chain to me, in any manner they shall agree on.

I do not know whom H. employs; but from H. I obtain intelligence; and his name and business should be kept profoundly secret, otherwise we shall not only lose the benefit derived from it, but may subject him to

* Major Tallmadge was an officer of the second regiment of Light Dragoons, and, on account of his activity, vigilance, and ability, he was often stationed near the enemy's lines. He held constant correspondence directly with the Commander-in-chief, whose confidence he seems to have enjoyed in a marked degree.

† A spy, who had been long employed in New York, and whose intelligence had been of great importance.

some unhappy fate. I observe what you say respecting your position at Bedford, and the fatigue of the horse. With regard to the first, when Bedford was pointed out, it was descriptive only of a central place between the two rivers, and as near the enemy as you could, with military prudence, take post for the purpose of covering the inhabitants, and preventing the ravages of small parties. The judgment of the officer commanding is, under the idea just expressed, to direct the particular spot and choice of ground, which ought to be varied continually, while you are near enough the enemy to give assistance to the people. With respect to the second matter, I have only to add, that I do not wish to have the horse unnecessarily exposed or fatigued; but if, in the discharge of accustomed duties, they should get worn down, there is no help for it. Colonel Moylan's regiment is on its march to join you, which will render the duty easier, and your troops there more respectable. I wish you to use every method in your power, through H. and others, to obtain information of the enemy's situation, and of their designs as far as they are to be come at. C——r speaks of the enemy's force up the river as not exceeding eight thousand men; but as I know he is mistaken, if he comprehends their whole force, I should be glad if his successor were cautioned against giving positive numbers by guess. This is deceptive; let him ascertain the particular corps, which can be no difficult matter to do, and he will soon, by taking a little pains indirectly, come at the strength of them and where they lie. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, New Windsor, 28 June, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter, dated yesterday, and thank you for the information it contained. I have now to request, that you will endeavour to employ some person in whom you can confide, and who at the same time is intelligent, to go into the works at Stony Point, or, if admittance is not to be gained, to obtain the best knowledge of them he can, so as to describe the particular kind of works, the precise spots on which they stand, and the strength of the garrison. If you should succeed in this point, I must beg you will transmit to me, without delay, a sketch of the works, that I may be able to form an accurate idea of them. You will yourself take the best view you can, that you may the better know whether the report you get from the person sent in is to be relied on. Describe the number of armed vessels and their situation, and keep the contents of this letter to yourself. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

New Windsor, 1 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received a letter from General Clinton at Canajoharie, which has filled me with inexpressible concern, as I apprehend the worst consequences to the expedition under your command, from the measures, which have been pursued there. My intention, which I thought sufficiently explained and known to you, was, that the troops under the command of General Clinton should be at Canajoharie and in the vicinity with boats

ready to proceed up the Mohawk River, or across to Otsego, as you should under a full consideration of all circumstances and information resolve on; and that, if the latter should be the choice, he should move rapidly over, quite light, with a sufficient stock of provisions and stores only to serve him till he could form his junction with you at Tioga, where every thing was to be provided.

Instead of this he had transported, and by the last accounts was transporting, provisions and stores for his whole brigade three months, and two hundred and twenty or thirty batteaux to receive them; by which means, in the place of having his design concealed till the moment of execution and forming his junction with you, in a manner by surprise, it is announced. The enemy are watching him, and, instead of moving light, rapidly, and undiscovered, he goes encumbered with useless supplies, and has his defence weakened by the attention he must pay to his convoy and the length of his line, at a time when more than probably the whole force of the enemy will be employed to oppose him. I did not expressly require that General Clinton, in case of his forming a junction with you at Tioga, should proceed without provisions and stores; but, from the whole scope and tenor of our several conversations on this subject, the difficulties and dangers that were apprehended in the route, the preparations making for the whole force on the Susquehanna, and other circumstances, I had not a doubt of its being fully understood, and took it for granted, when he was placed under your orders, that he would have been instructed accordingly.* I am, dear Sir, &c.

* General Clinton got his boats and provisions expeditiously to the south end of Otsego Lake, as will appear by the following extract from a letter written by him to Governor Clinton. — "I have now at this place

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

Head Quarters, 1 July, 1779.

SIR,

Herewith you will be pleased to receive general instructions for your conduct.* This you will consider as private and confidential. The importance of the two posts of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point to the enemy is too obvious to need explanation. We ought if possible to dispossess them. I recommend it to your particular attention, without delay, to gain as exact a knowledge as you can of the number of the garrisons, the state of the creeks that surround the former, the nature of the ground in the vicinity of both, the posi-

two hundred and eight boats, with all the stores, provision, and baggage of the army; so that I am now in the most perfect readiness to move down the Susquehanna whenever I receive General Sullivan's orders. I have thrown a dam across the outlet, which I conceive to be of infinite importance, as it has raised the Lake at least two feet, by which the boats may be taken down with less danger than otherwise; although from the intricate winding of the channel I expect to meet some difficulties on the way."— *July 6th.* This expedient proved successful. When the detachment was ready to move, the dam was broken, and the accumulated waters flowing from the lake caused the boats to be transported with much greater facility, than could have been done by the natural current of the stream. A junction was formed with General Sullivan at Tioga in due season to effect the objects of the expedition.

* General Wayne was appointed to the command of the light infantry of the line, and was stationed between Fort Montgomery and the main army at Smith's Clove. In his instructions it was said, "The principal object of your present station is to oppose any movement of the enemy against the forts, for which purpose you will exert yourself to gain an accurate knowledge of the scene of action, and all the possible landing-places and approaches to the forts and to your corps, with every advantageous spot for giving the most effectual opposition." He was likewise to endeavour to obtain the earliest information of the movements and designs of the enemy, and for this purpose to engage trusty persons to go within their lines as spies. It was moreover left to his discretion and prudence to attack without further order any separate parties of the enemy, whenever he should think a favorable opportunity presented itself.

tion and strength of the fortifications, the situation of the guards, the number and stations of the vessels in the river, and the precautions in general, which the enemy employ for their security.

It is a matter I have much at heart, to make some attempt upon these posts in the present weak state of the garrisons, and before the enemy commence any other operations, if warranted by a probability of success. I must entreat your best endeavours to acquire the necessary information, and, after having obtained this, that you will give me your opinion on the practicability of a surprise of one or both those places, especially that on the west side of the river.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

Head-Quarters, New Windsor, 5 July, 1779.

SIR,

I am extremely concerned to find by several late letters from General Sullivan, that he is likely to be disappointed in the Independent Companies, which were to reinforce him from the State of Pennsylvania. The consequences of this disappointment will certainly be very injurious; they may be more than injurious. For want of these, he will be obliged to reduce his operating force, and to establish the necessary posts of communication too low perhaps to act with safety and effect, or he must leave his communication and convoys in the most precarious state. I have advised him rather to hazard something in the latter respect than in the former, with an assurance that I would again solicit the aid of the State to strengthen the posts in his rear, and assist in protecting his convoys. I must entreat in

the most pressing terms, that the Council will be pleased, without delay, to take effectual measures to have the number of men, originally requested, sent forward. If the Independent Companies are not ready, I beg their place may be supplied by militia to be relieved periodically. The Council are fully sensible of the importance of success in the present expedition, and of the fatal mischiefs which would attend a defeat. We should perhaps lose an army, and our frontiers would be desolated and deluged in blood. A large reinforcement has been sent from Canada to join the savages. They are collecting their force for a vigorous opposition; and if they are successful, their devastations will exceed any thing we have yet experienced. Their means will be increased, and their cruelty will be emboldened by success and sharpened by revenge.

It was not in my power to send a greater Continental force. I stretched this string as hard as it would possibly bear, and relied on the further aid of the States more immediately concerned. I hope I shall not be eventually disappointed. I flatter myself the Council will think my anxiety on this occasion natural, and will excuse my importunity. With very great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

Head-Quarters, 5 July, 1779.

Sir,

The loss of your papers was certainly a most unlucky accident, and shows how dangerous it is to keep papers of any consequence at an advanced post. I beg you will take care to guard against the like in future. If you will send me a trusty person, I will replace the

guineas. I observe yourself and other officers have lost some clothing. Though I have not given an order of the kind before, yet in this particular exigence I am ready to give one on the clothier to those officers, who have been the sufferers, for such articles as are absolutely necessary. You will be pleased to communicate this to Colonel Sheldon, and request him to send the paymaster with a proper return to head-quarters. The person, who is most endangered by the acquisition of your letter, is one H. who lives not far from the Bowery, on the island of New York. I wish you would endeavour to give him the speediest notice of what has happened. My anxiety on his account is great. If he is really the man he has been represented to be, he will in all probability fall a sacrifice.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New Windsor, 9 July, 1779.

SIR,

On the 4th instant the enemy embarked a body of troops at Frog's Neck on the Sound, consisting, from the best information, of grenadiers, light infantry, and a few Hessians, amounting to about eighteen hundred, though some reports make the number much larger. They proceeded eastward. I did not receive intelligence of this till the afternoon of the 7th, having been absent from head-quarters from the morning of the preceding day, on a visit to our out-posts below, and those lately established by the enemy; when, from an apprehension that they might intend a sudden incursion into the State of Connecticut, I despatched an express to Governor Trumbull, and to the commanding officer of

Glover's brigade, advising them of the movement, and directing the latter to proceed by some route not far from the Sound, that he might with greater facility form a junction with the militia, and coöperate with them in case the enemy should make a descent.* I have not yet heard what is the object of this party; but we have it by report, that they have landed at New Haven, and most probably for the purpose of plundering, and perhaps burning, as these appear to form a considerable part of their present system of war. Besides plundering and burning, another object may be to distress and injure the harvest by alarming the militia and calling them out for the protection of the coast.

Enclosed your Excellency will receive a copy of a letter from Colonel Sheldon to General Heath, containing an account of a skirmish between a detachment of his regiment and a body of the enemy's horse on the morning of the 2d, near Bedford, and of their destroying a meeting-house and two or three dwelling-houses.† The main body of the enemy at present is at Phillipsburg, and in its vicinity. At Verplanck's Point and

* Glover's brigade was stationed at Providence. On receiving intelligence, ten days previously to the date of the above letter, that a detachment of British troops had sailed from Newport, thereby diminishing the necessity of a large force in Rhode Island to watch the enemy in that quarter, General Washington had ordered General Gates to send the brigade to the main army, and it was presumed now to be on its march through Connecticut.

† The detachment of the enemy was commanded by Tarleton. It consisted of light dragoons and infantry, amounting, according to some accounts, to three hundred and sixty. Tarleton stated the number at about two hundred. They attacked Sheldon at Pound Ridge, where he was stationed with about ninety light-horse. A skirmish ensued, and Sheldon was compelled by a force so much superior to retreat. Being reinforced by the militia, he returned to the attack, and pursued the enemy. The Americans had ten men wounded. Tarleton reported one killed and one wounded of his party. His reason for burning houses was, as he said, because the militia fired from them. — Heath's *Memoirs*, p. 208. Tarleton's *Letter*, *Remembrancer*, Vol. VIII. p. 365.

Stony Point they have sufficient garrisons to occupy the works, which appear from a near view to be very strong, particularly those on the latter. I am exceedingly mortified, that the circumstances of the army in respect to numbers oblige me to a mere defensive plan, and will not suffer me to pursue such measures, as the public good may seem to require and the public expectation to demand. I hope it will be remembered, that the army has been diminished by the expiration of the term of service of a number of the troops, that it is daily lessening from the same cause, that a considerable part of our remaining force is detached upon the western expedition, and that scarcely a single man has taken the field from any of the States, except New York and Virginia, and that these are employed in other quarters.

From the small exertions that have been made, I have but little hope that the battalions will be filled, or even made respectable, though it is a matter infinitely important. The business unhappily has been taken up so late by the particular States, that the levies, or recruits, who may be raised, will not be of half the service that they ought. Instead of being in the field at the opening of the campaign, they will not join the army till towards the close, or at least, before the middle of it, and, the greater part of their time, will be in winter-quarters. I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

New Windsor, 9 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

While the enemy are making excursions to distress the country, it has a very disagreeable aspect to remain

in a state of inactivity on our part. The reputation of the army, and the good of the service, seem to exact some attempt from it. The importance of Stony Point to the enemy makes it infinitely desirable, that this post could be the object. The works are formidable, but perhaps on a fuller examination they may be found accessible. A deserter yesterday informed me, that there was a sandy beach on the south side, running along the flank of the works, and only obstructed by a slight *abatis*, which might afford an easy and safe approach to a body of troops.

I wish you to take every step in your power to ascertain this point, and to gain a more accurate knowledge of the position in general, and particularly on the flanks and in the rear. Would it answer to send in a trusty, intelligent fellow in the character of a deserter, and on some plan that might enable him to return with expedition? I beg you to inform yourself as far as you can, and to give me your opinion of the practicability of an attempt upon this post. If it is undertaken, I should conceive it ought to be done by way of surprise in the night. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

New Windsor, 10 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Immediately upon receipt of your letter of this date, I ordered the quartermaster-general to furnish the espontoons you wrote for, and I presume you will get them in a day or two. My ideas of the enterprise in contemplation are these; that it should be attempted by the light infantry only, who should march under cover of night and with the utmost secrecy to the en-

emy's lines, securing every person they find, to prevent discovery. Between one and two hundred chosen men and officers I conceive fully sufficient for the surprise; and I apprehend the approach should be along the water on the south side, crossing the beach and entering at the *abatis*. This party is to be preceded by a vanguard of prudent and determined men, well commanded, who are to remove obstructions, secure the sentries, and drive in the guards. The whole of them are to advance with fixed bayonets and muskets unloaded. The officers commanding them are to know precisely what batteries, or particular parts of the line, they are respectively to possess, that confusion and the consequences of indecision may be avoided. These parties should be followed by the main body at a small distance, for the purpose of support and of making good the advantages which may be gained, or to bring them off in case of repulse and disappointment. Other parties may advance to the works (but not so as to be discovered till the conflict is begun) by the way of the causey and river on the north, if practicable, as well for the purpose of distracting the enemy in their defence, as to cut off their retreat. These parties may be small, unless the access and approaches should be very easy and safe.

The three approaches here mentioned should be well reconnoitred beforehand, and by persons of observation. Single men in the night will be more likely to ascertain facts, than the best glasses in the day. A white feather, or cockade, or some other visible badge of distinction for the night, should be worn by our troops, and a watchword agreed on to distinguish friends from foes. If success should attend the enterprise, measures should be instantly taken to prevent, if practicable, the retreat of the garrison by water, or to annoy them as much as

possible if they attempt it; and the guns should be immediately turned against the shipping and Verplanck's Point, and covered if possible from the enemy's fire.

Secrecy is so much more essential to this kind of enterprises, than numbers, that I should not think it advisable to employ any other than the light troops. If a surprise takes place, they are fully competent to the business; if it does not, numbers will avail little. As it is in the power of a single deserter to betray the design, defeat the project, and involve the parties in difficulties and danger, too much caution cannot be used to conceal the intended enterprise till the latest hour from all but the principal officers of your corps, and from the men till the moment of execution. Knowledge of your intention, ten minutes previously obtained, blasts all your hopes; for which reason a small detachment, composed of men whose fidelity you can rely on, under the care of a judicious officer, should guard every avenue through the marsh to the enemy's works, by which our deserters or the spies can pass, and prevent all intercourse. The usual time for exploits of this kind is a little before day, for which reason a vigilant officer is then more on the watch. I therefore recommend a midnight hour. I had in view to attempt Verplanck's Point at the same instant, that your operations should commence at Stony Point; but the uncertainty of coöperating in point of time, and the hazard thereby run of defeating the attempt on Stony Point, which is infinitely the most important, the other being dependent, has induced me to suspend that operation.

These are my general ideas of the plan for a surprise; but you are at liberty to depart from them in every instance, where you think they may be improved, or changed for the better. A dark night, and even a

rainy one, if you can find the way, will contribute to your success. The officers, in these night marches, should be extremely attentive to keep their men together, as well for the purpose of guarding against desertion to the enemy, as to prevent skulking. As it is a part of the plan, if the surprise should succeed, to make use of the enemy's cannon against their shipping and their post on the other side, it will be well to have a small detachment of artillery with you to serve them. I have sent an order to the park for this purpose, and, to cover the design, have ordered down a couple of light field-pieces. When you march, you can leave the pieces behind. So soon as you have fixed upon your plan and the time of execution, I shall be obliged to you to give me notice. I shall immediately order you a reinforcement of light infantry and espontoons.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS.

Head-Quarters, 10 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favors of the 9th from Luddington's and Reading. It gives me great concern to hear of the ravages of the enemy. The conduct of the militia at New Haven does them the highest honor. I had heard of it before through several channels.* I

* The British, under General Tryon and General Garth, landed near New Haven on the 5th of July, and the next day entered the town, plundered it, and burnt the public stores. In approaching the town they were bravely met by the militia, of whom twenty-seven were killed and nineteen wounded. Between thirty and forty of the inhabitants were carried off prisoners. General Tryon reported nine of the British killed, forty-two wounded, and twenty-five missing. — *Remembrancer*, Vol. VIII. p. 362. Barber's *History of New Haven*, p. 74.

have written to General Heath, to move with the two Connecticut brigades towards the enemy, by the way of Crompond in the first instance, and from thence to Ridgefield and Bedford; which I hope will animate the militia, and in some measure prevent the enemy's incursions.

July 11th. — It is probable that the public may have occasion, or at least wish, to know at some period the extent of the enemy's depredations and cruelties; indeed, it is right that the world should know them. I therefore request, that you will endeavour, as far as opportunity will permit, to ascertain as precisely as you can what number of houses they have destroyed in their expedition up the Sound, distinguishing the towns in which they were, and every other outrage that they have committed. I should be glad to receive a printed copy of General Tryon's proclamation, which he has published. I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* According to General Parsons's returns, in compliance with the above request, the enemy burnt in Fairfield, on the 9th of July, ninety-seven dwelling-houses, sixty-seven barns, forty-eight stores, two meeting-houses, a church, court-house, jail, and two school-houses. In Norwalk, they burnt, on the 11th of July, one hundred and thirty dwelling-houses, eighty-seven barns, twenty-two stores, seventeen shops, four mills, one church, and one meeting-house. Five vessels were also destroyed. The destruction of the churches and meeting-houses seemed to awaken some compunction in the breast of General Tryon. "I regret," said he, in his official despatch, "the loss of two places of public worship at Fairfield, which took fire unintentionally by the flakes from other buildings; and I gave strict orders for the preservation of that at Norwalk." It was deemed a sufficient apology for burning the private dwellings of a whole town, if any of the inhabitants fired at an invading enemy from their houses.

When the Assembly of Connecticut met in October, a committee was appointed to go to the towns destroyed by the British, and ascertain the amount of the losses. The report of the committee was transmitted to Congress by Governor Trumbull, with the name of each individual, whose property had been destroyed or plundered, and the estimated amount of his loss. The aggregates were as follows. At New Haven, the whole

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, New Windsor, 12 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am just honored with your letter of the 10th. Mine of this morning, which will probably reach you before this, will inform you that on hearing of the enemy's movement from below, I had detached a body of troops under Major-General Heath to counteract them. It gives me pain, that I have it not in my power to afford more effectual succour to the country; but the smallness of our force obliges me to confine my attention so entirely to one essential point, that I can do little more than lament the depredations of the enemy at a distance. I am persuaded that your Excellency will make every allowance for the incompetency of the means put into my hands. The security of the communication of this river is of so great importance, and the enemy have such a facility, by the assistance of water transportation, of moving from one place to another, that we dare not draw any considerable part of our force from this post, but with an

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loss amounted to $112,647; at Fairfield, $181,366; at Norwalk, $166,868; at Greenwich, $29,935.

In reply to Sir Henry Clinton's despatch, giving an account of these transactions, the minister said; "The expedition into Connecticut, upon which you detached Major-General Tryon, was ably planned and well executed; and you will acquaint Major-General Tryon and the officers that were under his care, that their conduct has met with his Majesty's approbation; but I cannot help lamenting with you, that the behaviour of the rebels, in firing from their houses upon the troops, rendered it necessary to make use of severities, that are ever painful to British soldiers to inflict, but that were such as are justified by the rules of war, and by the general practice of all nations upon such occasions. And in the present instance it was not only a chastisement, which the rebels justly deserved, but it appears to have been a measure also necessary for the safety and security of his Majesty's forces employed upon the occasion." — *Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, November 4th.*

embarrassing degree of caution. It is very probable in the present case, that one principal object of the operations on your coast may be to draw us off from the river, to facilitate an attack upon it. The movement towards Horseneck has more particularly this aspect. It is however very likely, that the detachment under Tryon may go on with its ravages on your coast, to disturb the inhabitants in the occupations of harvest, by which no doubt they do us very serious injury. I believe the accounts you have received rather overrate his force. From my best information, it consists of six regiments, the four that came from Rhode Island and two others, one regiment of Anspach, Fanning's, seventh, twenty-second, twenty-third, and fifty-fourth British. These cannot exceed, hardly equal, two thousand.

I thank your Excellency for the proclamation and answer.* The first is truly ridiculous and must tend to incense rather than intimidate; the last is laconic, but to the purpose. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN BEATTY, COMMISSARY-GENERAL OF PRISONERS.

Head-Quarters, 12 July, 1779.

SIR,

A copy of the proceedings of a board of general officers, on the subject of parole prisoners, accompanies this. You will find they have determined the persons, whose names are enclosed, to be breakers of parole. The two first made their escape from the enemy.

* The Proclamation sent abroad by General Tryon and Sir George Collier, when they invaded Connecticut; and Colonel Whiting's answer. — See *Remembrancer*, Vol. IX. p. 373.

The nine last were permitted to come out on parole, and have not obeyed the summons to return, nor given any satisfactory reasons for their delay. You are to inform the enemy, that we consider these persons, with such others as are clearly military prisoners and breakers of parole, whose cases were not submitted to the board, as violators of their parole, and are willing to account for such of them as we cannot oblige immediately to return, on the following terms; namely, by an exchange in the common order of capture, in the same manner as if they had not violated their paroles; and, in the mean time, by releasing an equal number of their officers of equal rank, to be held on parole, till the time of exchange comes about, on the forementioned principles.

You will immediately publish a summons, in positive but general terms, to all who have either deserted their paroles, in the first instance, or delayed complying with the summons to return, without assigning sufficient reasons for the delay, enjoining them instantly to return, and informing them that, in case of refusal, effectual measures will be taken to enforce a compliance; and, if they are not to be found, their names will be published in all the papers, as men, who are insensible to the obligations of honor, or the sufferings of their associates in captivity, which their misconduct tends to increase. Such as may be within your reach, you will oblige at once to return.

You will inform the enemy, that there may be several other persons, who have violated their paroles, that were either not officers at all, or did not belong to the army or to the militia in actual service, who are therefore considered by us as mere citizens, and not to be accounted for in military exchanges. As to such others, as were officers of the army, or of the

militia in actual service, at the time of capture, and who are alleged by the enemy to have broken their paroles, and are judged by us to have made their escape in a justifiable manner, you will inform the British commissary of their names, the light in which we consider them, and the reasons for which we do it; at the same time assuring him, that we are ready to hear and consider any facts he may have to produce in support of a different interpretation. I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

Head-Quarters, New Windsor, 14 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of delaying the proposed attempt, and I do not know but the latter preponderate. You may therefore carry it into execution to-morrow night, as you desired, unless some new motive or better information should induce you to think it best to defer it. You are at liberty to choose between the different plans on which we have conversed. But as it is important to have every information we can procure, if you could manage in the mean time to see Major Lee, it may be useful. He has been so long near the spot, and has taken so much pains to inform himself critically concerning the post, that I imagine he may be able to make you acquainted with some further details. Your interview must be managed with caution, or it may possibly raise suspicion.* I am, dear Sir, &c.

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* Major Henry Lee, with his light dragoons and M'Lane's company, was stationed at Haverstraw, for the purpose of gaining intelligence and watching the movements of the enemy.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MUHLENBERG.

Fort Montgomery, 15 July, 1779.

SIR,

This day General Wayne marched down towards Stony Point, to take a view of the enemy, and, if an opportunity offers, to attempt something serious. I therefore wish you to put your brigade in motion about midnight, and march that way in order to act as his situation may make it necessary. You will make your movements as secret as possible, and march perfectly light, taking with you such of your guards as may be in your route. One day's provision will be necessary for the men to have with them; and the rest that may be at the post you will have ready to follow, should circumstances require it. You shall hear from me when you are to return, unless the enterprise should prove unsuccessful; in which case you will return to your present post. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New Windsor, half past 9 o'clock, 16 July, 1779.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to transmit to your Excellency the enclosed copy of a letter from Brigadier-General Wayne, which this moment came to hand. I congratulate Congress upon our success; and what makes it still more agreeable, from the report of Captain Fishbourn, who brought me General Wayne's letter, the post was gained with but very inconsiderable loss on our part. As soon as I receive a particular account of the affair, I shall transmit it.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New Windsor, 20 July, 1779.

SIR,

On the 16th instant I had the honor to inform Congress of a successful attack upon the enemy's post at Stony Point, on the preceding night, by Brigadier-General Wayne and the corps of light infantry under his command. The ulterior operations, in which we have been engaged, have hitherto put it out of my power to transmit the particulars of this interesting event. They will now be found in the enclosed report, which I have received from General Wayne. To the encomiums he has deservedly bestowed on the officers and men under his command, it gives me pleasure to add, that his own conduct throughout the whole of this arduous enterprise merits the warmest approbation of Congress. He improved upon the plan recommended by me, and executed it in a manner that does signal honor to his judgment and to his bravery. In a critical moment of the assault, he received a flesh wound in the head with a musket-ball, but continued leading on his men with unshaken firmness.

I now beg leave, for the private satisfaction of Congress, to explain the motives which induced me to direct the attempt. In my former letters I have pointed out the advantages, which the enemy derived from the possession of this post and the one on the opposite side, and the inconveniences resulting from it to us. To deprive them of the former, and to remove the latter, were sufficient inducements to endeavour to dispossess them. The necessity of doing something to satisfy the expectations of the people, and reconcile them to the defensive plan we are obliged to pursue, and to the apparent inactivity which our situation imposes upon

us; the value of the acquisition in itself, with respect to the men, artillery, and stores, which composed the garrison; the effect it would have upon the successive operations of the campaign, and the check it would give to the immediate depredations of the enemy at the present season; all these motives concurred to determine me to the undertaking. The certain advantages of success, even if not so extensive as might be hoped, would, at all events, be very important; the probable disadvantages of a failure were comparatively inconsiderable, and, on the plan which was adopted, could amount to little more than the loss of a small number of men.

After reconnoitring the post myself, and collecting all the information I could get of its strength and situation, I found, that, without hazarding a greater loss than we were able to afford, and with little likelihood of success, the attempt to carry it could only be by way of surprise. I therefore resolved on this mode, and gave my instructions to General Wayne accordingly, in hopes that Verplanck's Point might fall in consequence of the reduction of the other. Dispositions were made for the purpose, which unluckily did not succeed. The evening appointed for the attack, I directed Major-General McDougall to put two brigades under marching orders to be moved down towards Verplanck's, as soon as he should receive intelligence of the success of the attempt on this side, and requested General Wayne to let his despatches to me pass through General McDougall, that he might have the earliest advice of the event. But by some misconception, they came directly to head-quarters, which occasioned a loss of several hours. The next morning, Major-General Howe was sent to take the command of those troops, with orders to advance to the vicinity of the enemy's

works, and open batteries against them. I was in hopes that this might either awe them, under the impression of what had happened on the other side, to surrender, or prepare the way for an assault. But some accidental delays, in bringing on the heavy cannon and intrenching tools necessary for an operation of this kind, unavoidably retarded its execution, till the approach of the enemy's main body made it too late. General Howe, to avoid being intercepted, found himself under the necessity of relinquishing his project and returning to a place of security. I did not unite the two attacks at the same time and in the same manner, because this would have rendered the enterprise more complex, more liable to suspicion, and less likely to succeed, for want of an exact coöperation, which could hardly have been expected.

When I came to examine the post at Stony Point, I found it would require more men to maintain it, than we could afford, without incapacitating the army for other operations. In the opinion of the engineer, corresponding with my own and that of all the general officers present, not less than fifteen hundred men would be requisite for its complete defence; and, from the nature of the works, which were open towards the river, a great deal of labor and expense must have been incurred, and much time employed, to make them defensible by us. The enemy depending on their shipping to protect their rear, had constructed the works solely against an attack by land. We should have had to apprehend equally an attack by water, and must have enclosed the post. While we were doing this, the whole army must have been in the vicinity, exposed to the risk of a general action on terms, which it would not be our interest to court, and too distant to assist in carrying on the fortifications at West Point, or to

support them in case of necessity. These considerations made it a unanimous sentiment to evacuate the post, remove the cannon and stores, and destroy the works, which was accomplished on the night of the 18th, one piece of heavy cannon only excepted. For want of proper tackling within reach to transport the cannon by land, we were obliged to send them to the fort by water. The movements of the enemy's vessels created some uneasiness on their account, and induced me to keep one of the pieces for their protection, which finally could not be brought off without risking more for its preservation than it was worth. We also lost a galley, which was ordered down to cover the boats. She got under way on her return the afternoon of the 18th. The enemy began a severe and continued cannonade upon her, from which having suffered some injury she was run on shore, which disabled her from proceeding. As she could not be got afloat till late in the flood tide, and one or two of the enemy's vessels under favor of the night passed above her, she was set on fire and blown up.

Disappointed in our attempt on the other side, we may lose some of the principal advantages hoped from the undertaking. The enemy may reëstablish the post at Stony Point, and still continue to interrupt that communication. Had both places been carried, though we should not have been able to occupy them ourselves, there is great reason to believe the enemy would hardly have mutilated their main body a second time, and gone through the same trouble to regain possession of posts where they had been so unfortunate. But though we may not reap all the benefits, which might have followed, those we do reap are very important. The diminution of the enemy's force, by the loss of so many men, will be felt in their present circumstances. The

artillery and stores will be a valuable acquisition to us, especially in our scarcity of heavy cannon for the forts. The event will have a good effect upon the minds of the people, give our troops greater confidence in themselves, and depress the spirits of the enemy proportionably. If they resolve to reëstablish the post, they must keep their force collected for the purpose. This will serve to confine their ravages within a narrower compass, and to a part of the country already exhausted. They must lose part of the remainder of the campaign in rebuilding the works; and, when they have left a garrison for its defence, their main body, by being lessened, must act with so much the less energy, and so much the greater caution.

They have now brought their whole force up the river, and yesterday they landed a body at Stony Point. It is supposed not impossible, that General Clinton may retaliate by a stroke upon West Point; and his having stripped New York and its dependencies pretty bare, and brought up a number of small boats, are circumstances that give a color to the surmise. Though all this may very well be resolved into different motives, prudence requires that our dispositions should have immediate reference to the security of this post; and I have therefore drawn our force together, so that the whole may act in its defence on an emergency. Tomorrow I shall remove my own quarters to the fort.

It is probable Congress will be pleased to bestow some marks of consideration upon those officers, who distinguished themselves upon this occasion. Every officer and man of the corps deserves great credit; but there were particular ones, whose situation placed them foremost in danger, and made their conduct most conspicuous. Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury and Major Stewart commanded the two attacks. Lieutenants

Gibbons and Knox commanded the advanced parties, or *forlorn hope;* and all acquitted themselves as well as possible. These officers have a claim to be more particularly noticed. In any other service promotion would be the proper reward, but in ours it would be injurious. I take the liberty to recommend in preference some honorary present, especially to the field-officers. A brevet captaincy to the other two, as it will have no operation in regimental rank, may not be amiss.

Congress will perceive, that some pecuniary rewards were promised by General Wayne to his corps. This was done with my concurrence; and in addition to them, as a greater incitement to their exertions, they were also promised the benefit of whatever was taken in the fort. The artillery and stores are converted to the use of the public; but, in compliance with my engagements, it will be necessary to have them appraised, and the amount paid to the captors in money. I hope my conduct in this instance will not be disapproved. Mr. Archer, who will have the honor of delivering these despatches, is a volunteer aid to General Wayne, and a gentlemen of merit. His zeal, activity, and spirit are conspicuous upon every occasion. I am, &c.*

P. S. Congress may be at a loss what to do with Mr. Archer. A captain's brevet, or commission in the army at large, will be equal to his wishes; and he deserves encouragement on every account. Lest there should be any misapprehension, as to what is mentioned about the manner of sending despatches through General McDougall, I beg leave to be more explicit. I directed General Wayne, when he marched from his

* For General Wayne's letters, and other particulars respecting the affair at Stony Point, see APPENDIX, No. VI.

ground, to send his despatches in the first instance to the officer of his baggage-guard, left at the encampment from which he marched, who was to inform his messenger where I was to be found. I left word with this officer to forward the messenger to General McDougall, and I desired General McDougall to open the despatches. The messenger, who was Captain Fishbourn, came directly on, either through misconception in General Wayne, in the officer of the guard, or in himself.

I forgot to mention that there are two standards taken, one belonging to the garrison, and one to the seventeenth regiment. These shall be sent to Congress by the first convenient opportunity.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 25 July, 1779.*

SIR,

Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury, having communicated to me his intention to return to France at the present juncture, on some matters interesting to himself, I have thought proper to give him this letter to testify to Congress the favorable opinion I entertain of his conduct. The marks of their approbation, which he received on

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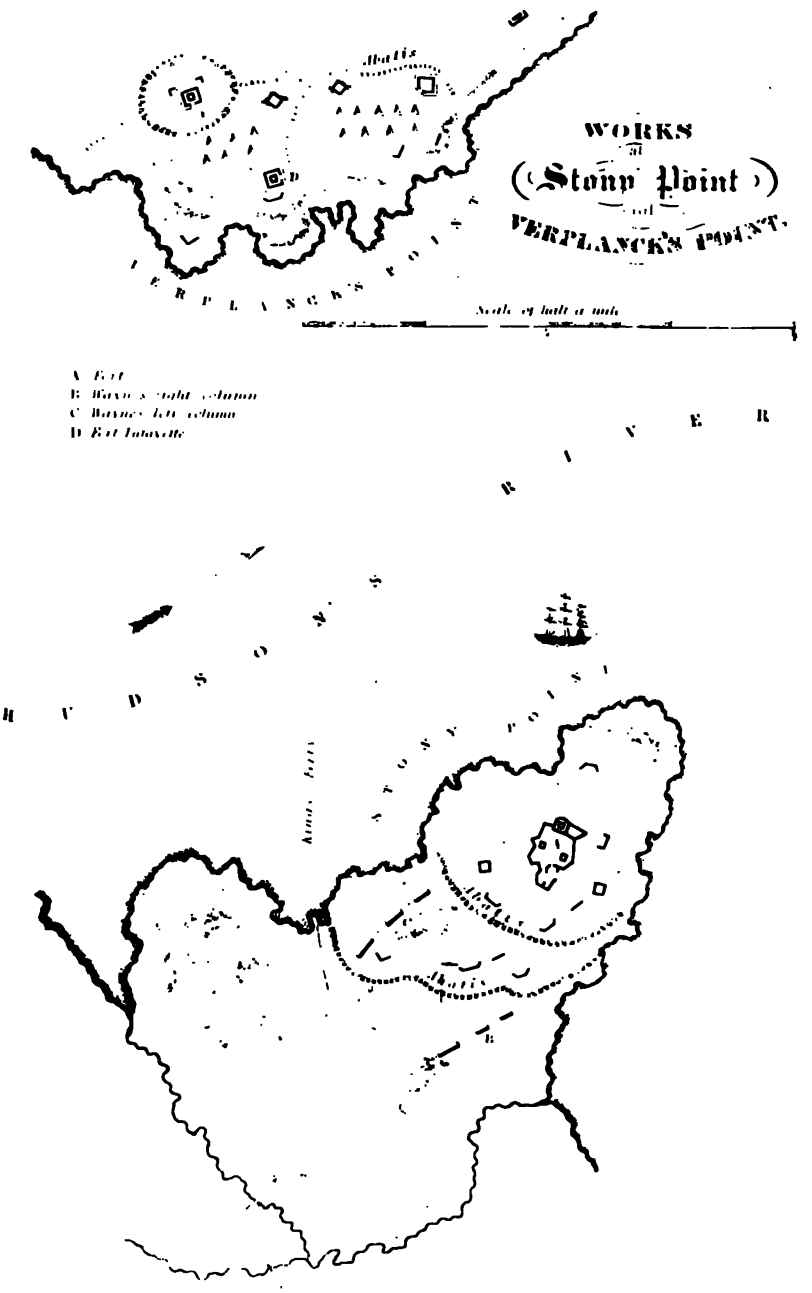
* General Washington established his head-quarters at West Point on the 21st of July, and remained there till December, when the army went into winter-quarters. It was during this period, that the strong works at West Point and its vicinity were chiefly constructed. Part of the time, two thousand five hundred men were daily on fatigue duty. The right wing of the army, consisting of the Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia troops, was commanded by General Putnam; the left wing, composed of the Connecticut brigades and some of the Massachusetts regiments, was under General Heath, and posted in the Highlands on the east side of the river. The centre, or garrison of West Point, was under the immediate command of General McDougall.


WORKS
at
Stony Point
and
VERPLANCK'S POINT.
Scale of half a mile
A Fort
B Wayne's right column
C Waynes left column
D Fort Lafayette
HUDSON'S RIVER
STONY POINT
Abatis

a former occasion, have been amply justified by all his subsequent behaviour. He has signalized himself in more than one instance since; and in the late assault of Stony Point he commanded one of the attacks, was the first that entered the enemy's works, and struck the British flag with his own hands, as reported by General Wayne. It is but justice to him to declare, that, in the different stations in which he has been employed, he has rendered services of real utility, and has acquitted himself in every respect as an officer of distinguished merit, one whose talents, zeal, activity, and bravery, alike entitle him to particular notice. He has intimated to me a desire to obtain a furlough for a few months. I doubt not Congress will be disposed to grant him every indulgence, which can be granted with propriety. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 28 July, 1779.

SIR,

You will be pleased, without delay, to repair to Ridgefield, and take your quarters with that part of your command. This will comprehend Glover's brigade, the cavalry, Armand's independent corps, and the militia in service in that part of the country. The primary object of this command is to cover the country, and prevent as far as possible the depredations of the enemy; but this is not to be done at the expense of the security of the troops, which are, therefore, not to take any stationary post, within such a distance of a superior body of the enemy as will admit of surprise. As far as circumstances will permit, you are to keep constantly in view a communication with the main army.

On this account, in case of any movement of the enemy on your right flank by land or water, you are to approach this post, and always preserve a relative position. It is suggested, in a letter from General Glover, that Pound Ridge would be a good position for your corps. I am not certain where this is, but as far as I recollect, it is an intermediate point between Ridgefield and Bedford, which will at once bring the troops nearer to the Sound and nearer to this post.

If this should be a just idea, I should recommend that place in preference to Ridgefield, because it better answers the two objects, of covering the country, and communicating with the forts, and is, at the same time, sufficiently secure. When you arrive at Ridgefield, you will be best able to determine the propriety of the change. Great vigilance and care will be necessary on your part. The enemy are pretty numerous in horse. By mounting them double, and taking infantry behind the dragoons, and mounting others upon their baggage-horses, they may with a good deal of celerity bring a force superior to yours against you, which makes it essential, that you should use every precaution to have timely notice; and it would not be amiss, as an additional security, to encamp with your infantry on a spot, where the enemy's cavalry could not act to advantage.

If the enemy should lay themselves open to any little partisan strokes, you have my consent to improve the opportunity; but it must not be done at the risk of the corps under your command. General Wolcott, with a body of militia, is now stationed at Horseneck. This appears to me to be a very insecure situation, and such as nothing but a want of enterprise in the enemy can reconcile with any degree of safety. He ought, in my opinion, immediately to change his position for another at some proper point between Horseneck and the post

you may occupy, from which parties can be occasionally detached towards the Sound.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.*

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LEWIS FLEURY.

Certificate.

West Point, 28 July, 1779.

I certify that Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury has served in the army of the United States since the beginning of the campaign, 1777, to the present period, and has uniformly acquitted himself as an officer of distinguished merit for talents, zeal, activity, prudence, and bravery; that he first obtained a captain's commission from Congress, and entered as a volunteer in a corps of riflemen, in which, by his activity and bravery, he soon

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* Just at this time, Sir George Collier obtained intelligence, that an armament had sailed from Boston to Penobscot, with the view of taking that post from Colonel McLean, who had arrived there with a body of troops from Halifax about the middle of June. He immediately resolved to proceed thither with his fleet and attack the Boston squadron. Sir Henry Clinton said, in writing to Lord George Germain, "This will leave me totally on the defensive till the arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot. Washington seems inclined to try for the posts at Verplanck's Point and Stony Point; but as he did not make any vigorous attempt on the latter, whilst his success on the former gave him every advantage, I cannot conceive that he will now undertake it. He is certainly assembling all the force he can in the mountains, and, if he means to make an effort, it will be against those posts, on the sailing of the commodore. His departure will leave us with only one twenty-gun ship and two sloops; enough to cover us from any thing the enemy can bring down, but not sufficient to give assistance should rapid movements and disembarkation be required; neither indeed will it secure us from danger from without. But the commodore thinks any attempt of that nature highly improbable."—*MS. Letter, July 28th.*

General Clinton had received a letter from General Haldimand, dated at Quebec on the 26th of May, expressing great apprehensions that an attack on Canada was meditated, as batteaux were building near Skenes-

recommended himself to notice; that he next served as brigade-major, with the rank of major, first in the infantry, and afterwards in the cavalry, in which stations he acquired reputation in the army, and the approbation of his commanding officers, of which he has the most ample testimonies; that, towards the conclusion of the campaign of 1777, he was sent to the important post of Fort Mifflin, in quality of engineer, in which he rendered essential services, and equally signalized his intelligence and his valor.

That, in consequence of his good conduct on this and on former occasions, he was promoted by Congress to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and has been since employed in the following stations, namely, as a sub-inspector, as second in command in a corps of light infantry, in an expedition against Rhode Island, and lastly as commandant of a battalion of light infantry, in the army under my immediate command; that, in

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borough, and he feared small parties would cross the line and unite in the heart of the country. His whole amount of forces, from Lake Ontario to Quebec, he said, did not exceed sixteen hundred regular British troops, and upon the greatest emergency he could not assemble more than one thousand men. He added, that since the war with France there had been a change in the disposition of the Canadians, that the Germans were unfit by nature and education for the American service, that they had been necessarily dispersed at small posts, and had thus in some degree imbibed the spirit of the inhabitants, and that frequent desertions had taken place. In this state of things he thought a reinforcement of two thousand men absolutely necessary to ensure the safety of Canada. Sir Henry Clinton proposed to send them as soon as a convoy could be procured.

These facts show, that General Washington's feint, in ordering batteaux to be built near Lake Champlain and other preparations to be made at Coos, with the design of diverting General Haldimand's attention from the western expedition, had been effectual. It was moreover the means of drawing away two thousand of General Clinton's force from New York. General Washington supposed the force in Canada to be much larger, than it proves to have been by General Haldimand's letter, and formed his plans upon that supposition. Spies had been employed there during the winter, but their reports were contradictory and uncertain.

each of these capacities, as well as the former, he has justified the confidence reposed in him, and acquired more and more the character of a judicious, well-informed, indefatigable, and brave officer. In the assault of Stony Point, a strong, fortified post of the enemy on the North River, he commanded one of the attacks, was the first that entered the main works, and struck the British flag with his own hands.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

West Point, 29 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have a pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your obliging favor of the 15th instant, and in finding by it, that the author of the *Queries Political and Military* * has had no great cause to exult in the favorable reception of them by the public. Without a

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* These *Queries* were written by General Charles Lee, and printed anonymously in the MARYLAND JOURNAL, a paper published by William Goddard, a friend of General Lee. The Queries were penned in a very malignant spirit, and were designed to injure General Washington, as far as it could be done by such an effusion of spleen and ill-temper. The following are specimens.

"Whether it is salutary or dangerous, consistent with or abhorrent from the spirit and principles of liberty and republicanism, to inculcate and encourage in the people an idea, that their welfare, safety, and glory depend on one man? Whether they really do depend on one man?

"Whether amongst the late warm, or rather loyal addresses of this city [Philadelphia] to his Excellency General Washington, there was a single mortal, one gentleman only excepted, who could possibly be acquainted with his merits?

"Whether the gentleman excepted does really think his Excellency a great man, or whether evidences could not be produced of his thinking quite the reverse?

"Whether the armies under Gates and Arnold, and the detachment under Stark to the northward, or that immediately under his Excellency in Pennsylvania, gave the decisive turn to the fortune of war?"

There were twenty-five queries of a similar tenor and bearing. The

clue, I should have been at no great loss to trace the malevolent writer; but I have seen a history of the transaction, and felt a pleasure mingled with pain at the narration. To stand well in the estimation of one's country is a happiness, that no rational creature can be insensible of. To be pursued, first under the mask of friendship, and, when disguise would suit no longer, as an open calumniator, with gross misrepresentation and *self-known* falsehoods, carries an alloy, which no mind can bear with perfect composure.

The motives, which actuate this gentleman, can better be accounted for by himself than by me. If he can produce a single instance, in which I have mentioned his name, after his trial commenced, where it was in my power to avoid it, and, when it was not, where I have done it with the smallest degree of acrimony or disrespect, I will consent that the world shall view my character in as disreputable a light, as he wishes to place it.

"gentleman" here referred to was President Reed, who wrote to Washington, when he forwarded to him a copy of the Queries; "I should not have troubled you with the enclosed paper, if I did not know that you can look down with contempt on these feeble efforts of malevolence and resentment, and that I am introduced into it to bear false witness. I have addressed a piece to the printer, wherein I have made such remarks and taken such a notice of this attempt, as I thought a respect to my own character required. I have also the pleasure of assuring you, that the performance has met with the most general detestation and resentment, involving the printer and all concerned in a most disagreeable dilemma. This is so true a criterion of the sense of the public, that I cannot help congratulating you on this genuine mark of public affection." — *MS. Letter, July 15th.*

Much indignation was expressed against Goddard when the *Queries* appeared in his paper. A large number of the most respectable citizens of Baltimore withdrew their patronage from the *Maryland Journal*, publicly avowing as a reason, that they considered it subservient to the interests of the enemy. Mr. Goddard published a recantation, in which he acknowledged, that "he had transgressed against truth, justice, and his duty as a good citizen," in giving currency to the *Queries*, and at the same time declared the author of them to be General Lee.

What cause there is, then, for such a profusion of venom, as he is emitting upon all occasions, unless by an act of public duty, in bringing him to trial at his own solicitation, I have disappointed him and raised his ire; or he conceives that, in proportion as he can darken the shades of my character, he illuminates his own;—whether these, I say, or motives still more hidden and dark, govern him, I shall not undertake to decide; nor have I time to inquire into them at present.

If I had ever assumed the character of a military genius and an officer of experience; if, under these false colors, I had solicited the command I was honored with; or if, after my appointment, I had presumptuously driven on, under the sole guidance of my own judgment and self-will, and misfortunes, the result of obstinacy and misconduct, not of necessity, had followed, I should have thought myself a proper subject for the lash, not only of his, but of the pen of every other writer, and a fit object for public resentment. But when it is well known, that the command was in a manner forced upon me, that I accepted it with the utmost diffidence, from a consciousness that it required greater abilities and more experience than I possessed, to conduct a great military machine, embarrassed as I knew ours must be by a variety of complex circumstances, being as it were but little more than a mere chaos; and when nothing more was promised on my part, than has been most inviolably performed; it is rather grating to pass over in silence charges, which may impress the uninformed, though others know, that these charges have neither reason nor truth to support them, and that a plain and simple narrative of facts would defeat all his assertions, notwithstanding they are made with an effrontery, which few men do, and, for the honor of human nature, none ought to possess.

If this gentleman is envious of my station, and thinks I stand in his way to preferment, I can assure him, in most solemn terms, that the first wish of my soul is to return to that peaceful retirement, and domestic ease and happiness, from whence I came. To this end all my labors have been directed, and for this purpose have I been more than four years a perfect slave, endeavouring, under as many embarrassing circumstances as ever fell to one man's lot to encounter, and with as pure motives as ever man was influenced by, to promote the cause and service I had embarked in.

You may form a pretty good judgment of my prospect of a brilliant campaign, and of the figure I shall make in it, when I inform you, that, excepting about four hundred recruits from the State of Massachusetts Bay (a portion of whom I am told are children, hired at about fifteen hundred dollars each for nine months' service), I have had no reinforcement to this army since last campaign, while our numbers have been, and now are, diminishing daily by the expiring terms of the men's services, to say nothing of the natural waste by sickness, death, and desertion. Discouraging as this is, I feel more from the state of our currency, and the little attention, which hitherto appears to have been paid to our finances, than from the smallness of our army; and yet, Providence having so often taken us up, when bereft of every other hope, I trust we shall not fail even in this. The present temper and disposition of the people to facilitate a loan, to discountenance speculation, and to raise the value of the money, are a happy presage of resulting good, and ought to be cherished by every possible means, not repugnant to good order and government. With you I conceive, that great events are comprised in the next six months; and I wish I had such information as would carry me

along with you in opinion, that Spain has declared in our favor. But, having no knowledge of facts to ground such a belief upon, I am apprehensive, that the natural sloth of one court, and the intrigues and artifices of the other, will keep things in a state of negotiation, till the effect of the present exertions of Great Britain this campaign is known, and some new scene opened to our view.

The public are already possessed of the little military occurrences of this quarter. I need not repeat them. Some considerable movement of the enemy is in agitation, but of what nature, and where pointed, I have not been able to discover. Lord Cornwallis is arrived, and a number of troops, it is said is hourly expected. My respectful compliments attend Mrs. Reed, and the ladies of your family. With very great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

West Point, 30 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of this date came duly to hand. I shall certainly not undertake any thing capital without your knowledge. I wish for your opinion, as a friend, not as commanding officer of the light troops, whether another attempt upon Stony Point by way of surprise is eligible. In any other manner, under present appearances and information, no good I am sure can result from it. Lord Cornwallis is undoubtedly arrived, and I have information, which bears all the marks of authenticity, that Admiral Arbuthnot, with the grand fleet, left Torbay the 26th of May, as it is said, with seven thousand troops, Hessians and British, for America. A deserter,

who left the city of New York on Tuesday last, says it was reported, that a number of transports had arrived at Sandy Hook. I have not heard, nor do I believe, that Lord Cornwallis supersedes Sir Harry. I am very sincerely and affectionately, dear Sir, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, IN CONGRESS.*

West Point, 1 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received with pleasure and thank you for your obliging favor of the 24th ultimo. I shall be happy in such communications, as your leisure and other considerations will permit you to transmit to me, for I am as totally unacquainted with the political state of things, and what is going forward in the great national council, as if I was an alien; when a competent knowledge of the temper and designs of our allies, from time to time, and the frequent changes and complexion of affairs in Europe might, as they ought to do, have a considerable influence on the operations of our army, and would in many cases determine the propriety of measures, which under a cloud of darkness can only be groped at. I say this upon a presumption, that Congress, either through their own ministers or that of France, must be acquainted in some degree with the plans of Great Britain, and the designs of France and Spain. If I mistake in this conjecture, it is to be lamented that they have not better information; or, if political motives render disclosures of this kind improper, I am content to remain in ignorance.

From what causes it proceeds I shall not undertake

* Mr. Randolph had recently entered Congress as a member from Virginia.

to say, but so the fact is, that we are laboring under the effects of two of the greatest evils, that can befall a state at war, namely, a reduced army at the beginning of a campaign, which more than probably is intended for a decisive one, and want of money, or rather a redundancy of it, by which it is become of no value. Why timely expedients were not hit upon to guard against the first, and what measures have been or can be at this late hour adopted to remove the second, belongs to your honorable body to point out. For me, to lament the one and feel the ill effects of the other is all that remains. I heard of your arrival at Philadelphia with pleasure, and shall, when circumstances will permit you to leave it, be happy in seeing you at camp, being, with very great regard and affection, dear Sir, &c.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.*

West Point, 6 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have been honored with your letter of the 17th of July, upon the case of Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton. This subject, on more mature consideration, appears to be involved in greater difficulty than I apprehended. When I first received the proceedings of the Council upon it, transmitted in your Excellency's letter of the 19th of June, I had no doubt of the propriety of the treatment decreed against Mr. Hamilton, as being founded in principles of a just retaliation. But, upon examining the matter more minutely, and consulting with several intelligent general officers, it

* Thomas Jefferson had been chosen Governor of Virginia on the 1st of June, as successor to Patrick Henry.

seems to be their opinion, that Mr. Hamilton could not, according to the usage of war, after his capitulation even in the manner it was made, be subjected to any uncommon severity under that idea, and that the capitulation placed him upon a different footing from that of a mere prisoner at discretion.

Whether it may be expedient to continue him in his present confinement from motives of policy, and to satisfy our people, is a question I cannot determine; but if it should be, I would take the liberty to suggest, that it may be proper to publish all the cruelties he has committed or abetted, in a particular manner, and the evidence in support of the charges, that the world, holding his conduct in abhorrence, may feel and approve the justice of his fate. Indeed, whatever may be the line of conduct towards him, this may be advisable. If, from the considerations I have mentioned, the rigor of his treatment is mitigated, yet he cannot claim of right upon any ground the extensive indulgence, which General Phillips seems to expect for him; and I should not hesitate to withhold from him a thousand privileges I might allow to common prisoners. He certainly merits a discrimination; and, although the practice of war may not justify all the measures, that have been taken against him, he may unquestionably, without any breach of public faith or the least shadow of imputation, be confined to a room. His safe custody will be an object of great importance.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

* Henry Hamilton had been for several years Lieutenant-Governor of Detroit and the British dependencies in that region. On the 24th of February he had resigned himself, and a party of troops under his command, prisoners of war by capitulation to Colonel Clarke, of Virginia, who, by a spirited and well-conducted enterprise, had passed through the wilderness at the head of a detachment from that State, and invested Fort St. Vincent's, in the Illinois country, where Governor Hamilton

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 10 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of yesterday with its enclosures. The plan you propose for the attack of Paulus Hook, and for making good the retreat of the party, is well concerted, and such as would be most likely to succeed, if the enterprise were to be carried into execution. But upon the whole, in the present position of the enemy's army, I should deem the attempt too hazardous, and not warranted by the mag-

was then stationed. He and several other prisoners were sent to Virginia. It appeared by papers laid before the Council of the State, that Governor Hamilton had issued proclamations and approved of practices, which were marked with cruelty towards the people that fell into his hands, such as inciting the Indians to bring in scalps, putting prisoners in irons, and giving them up to be the victims of savage barbarity. The Council decided, that Governor Hamilton was a proper subject for retaliation, and that he should be put in irons and confined in a jail. The British general Phillips, who was then at Charlottesville with the convention troops, wrote a long and temperate letter on the subject to Governor Jefferson, arguing, upon military principles, that this treatment of Governor Hamilton could not be justified, even if the charges against him were true. Had he been captured, or had he surrendered at discretion, General Phillips acknowledged, that he would have been at the mercy of his enemies; but since he had capitulated upon honorable terms, which were signed in the usual form by both parties, he could not be made accountable for alleged previous misdemeanors, without the violation of a compact, which had always been considered sacred by civilized nations.

Governor Jefferson, who said that "he had the highest idea of the sacredness of those contracts, which take place between nation and nation at war, and would be the last on earth, who should do any thing in violation of them," represented the matter fully to General Washington, and asked his advice. The above letter was written in reply, and Governor Hamilton's confinement was mitigated accordingly. It is but justice to General Phillips to say, since he had made himself somewhat odious by his correspondence and deportment at Cambridge, that his letter to Governor Jefferson on this occasion was highly honorable to him, both on the score of the temper and sentiments it exhibited, and the moderation and courtesy with which it was written.

nitude of the object. We should lose more in case of failure, than we could gain in case of success; and a single deserter, or disaffected inhabitant, may disclose the design and involve the party in ruin. The idea I had of the matter was, that it might not require more than three hundred men. It becomes the less eligible from the greater number you think requisite, which is too great to expose to any material danger. These considerations induce me to suspend the attempt till a more favorable opportunity, unless it can be made in a manner less hazardous. The manner I have in view is by water, by way of Newark Bay. Boats may be collected near Elizabethtown, so as to threaten Staten Island.

The party intended for the enterprise may either embark there, proceed up the bay, and land within two or three miles of the post, or it may meet the boats near Newark, embark there, and cross directly over. The doubt is, whether, notwithstanding the collection of the boats would look immediately towards Staten Island, it may not also give the alarm for Paulus Hook, and put them upon their guard. This, I think, is somewhat to be apprehended. I would however wish you to turn your thoughts this way, and give me your opinion as to the probability of success. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL THEODORIC BLAND.

West Point, 11 August, 1779.

SIR,

Major-General Phillips and Major-General the Baron de Riedesel with his lady, and the gentlemen composing their respective families, have permission to go into New York on parole. You will be pleased, therefore,

to notify them of this, and furnish the Generals with a copy of the enclosed route. That it may be strictly observed, and to prevent as much as possible the consequences that might arise from their travelling the country alone, you will direct a sensible and discreet officer to attend them. Should they go separately, or set out at different times, one with each General will be necessary. They may be informed, that the commissary of prisoners will take their paroles at Elizabethtown, and procure for them a safe passport to New York. I am, Sir, &c.

TO DR. JOHN COCHRAN, SURGEON AND PHYSICIAN GENERAL.

West Point, 16 August, 1779.

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprize them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise, that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered, is rather more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter.

Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans, or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beef-steak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing

the space and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which without them would be near twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover, that apples will make pies; and it is a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples, instead of having both of beef-steaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates, once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them; and am, dear Doctor, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

West Point, 16 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I beg you to accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 10th, transmitting an extract from Mr. Bingham's.* The intelligence it gives is infinitely interesting, and I hope will be followed by events of still more decisive importance. The conduct of England, in rejecting the mediation of Spain, is more strongly tinctured with insanity, than any thing she has done in the course of the contest, unless she be sure of very powerful aid from some of the northern states. This seems to be the only rational solution, that can be given to her obstinacy.

I enclose to you a letter from General Wayne, a part of the contents of which he communicated to me, concerning some officers of his corps, whom he omitted in his former report. As this omission has given

* Giving an account of the capture of Grenada in the West Indies, by Count d'Estaing, and his naval engagement with the British squadron under Admiral Byron.

dissatisfaction, and, as the gentlemen concerned are very deserving, I shall be happy if Congress should think it proper to publish General Wayne's letter, which I doubt not will effectually remove it. I take the liberty of mentioning this to your Excellency, that, if you see no impropriety in the publication, you may give it your aid. With the greatest esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

West Point, 17 August, 1779.

SIR,

Some time ago you applied to me to know, if you should receive payment of General M——'s bonds, and of the bond due from the deceased Mr. M——'s estate to me; and you were, after animadverting a little upon the subject, authorized to do so. Of course I presume the money has been received. I have since considered the matter in every point of view in which my judgment enables me to place it, and am resolved to receive no more old debts (such I mean as were contracted and ought to have been paid before the war) at the present nominal value of the money, unless compelled to do it, or it is the practice of others to do it. Neither justice, reason, nor policy requires it. The law undoubtedly was well designed. It was intended to stamp a value upon, and to give a free circulation to, the paper bills of credit; but it never was nor could have been intended to make a man take a shilling or sixpence in the pound for a just debt, which his debtor is well able to pay, and thereby involve himself in ruin. I am as willing now, as I ever was, to take paper money for every kind of debt, and at its

present depreciated value for those debts, which have been contracted since the money became so; but I will not in future receive the nominal sum for such old debts as come under the above description, except as before specified.

The fear of injuring, by any example of mine, the credit of our paper currency, if I attempted to discriminate between the real and nominal value of paper money, has already sunk for me a large sum, if the bonds before mentioned are paid off; the advantage taken in doing which no man of honor or common honesty can reconcile to his own feelings or conscience; not as respects me, do I mean, but transactions of this kind generally. The thing which induces me to mention the matter to you at present is, the circumstance you have related respecting the wages of Roberts, which you say, according to his demands, will amount to upwards of two thousand pounds, and come to as much for the service of a common miller for one year only, as I shall get for six hundred acres of land sold to M —— in the best of times and in the most valuable part of Virginia, that ought to have been paid for before the money began to depreciate; nay, years before the war. This is such a manifest abuse of reason and justice, that no arguments can reconcile it to common sense or common honesty. Instead of appealing to me, who have not the means of information, or knowledge of common usage and practice in matters of this kind in the State, or the laws that govern there, I wish you would consult men of honor, honesty, and firm attachment to the cause, and govern yourself by their advice, or by their conduct. If it be customary with others to receive money in this way, that is, sixpence or one shilling in the pound for old debts; if it is thought to be promotive of the great cause we are embarked in

for individuals to do so, thereby ruining themselves while others are reaping the benefit of such distress; if the law imposes this, and it is thought right to submit, I will not say aught against it, nor oppose another word to it. No man has gone, and no man will go, further to serve the public than myself. If sacrificing my whole estate would effect any valuable purpose, I would not hesitate one moment in doing it. But my submitting in matters of this kind, unless the same is done by others, is no more than a drop in the bucket. In fact, it is not serving the public, but enriching individuals, and countenancing dishonesty; for sure I am, that no honest man would attempt to pay twenty shillings with one, or perhaps half of one. In a word, I had rather make a present of the bonds, than receive payment of them in so shameful a way. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 17 August, 1779

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of yesterday on the subject of our confidential friend. It appears to me, that the detail he seems to desire will be rather too minute, and tend to excite suspicion instead of giving him credit with the enemy. The idea of what was communicated before was to pretend, that he had made general observations and inquiries in the army, and had formed an average estimate of the several brigades as the result. The particular strength of each regiment would exceed this purpose, and in some measure contradict the principle. But if, on his return, he finds the present not satisfactory, and the enemy press for what he now requires, it shall not be refused. Let

him in the first place make the experiment with what he has.

I am really at a loss what opinion to form of this man. His former conduct in this dispute, from the accounts I have had of it, are in his favor; his conduct in the execution of his present occupation has not been to his disadvantage; but still there are some little appearances about him, that give me distrust; and, as the enemy have it more in their power to reward certain services than we have, in the way which is most tempting, I always think it necessary to be very guarded with those, who are professedly acting in double characters. This has hitherto prevented my doing any thing for the man in question, in the way of office, lest it might really put it in his power to do us mischief; but, as the pretext upon which he applies is plausible and may be honest, I shall endeavour to find some place, which will answer the purpose, and, by keeping him mostly remote from the army, leave it the less in his power to turn it to our injury. We must endeavour to make it his interest to be faithful; for, as it is apparent he means to get something by the business, and will even receive double wages, we must take care, if possible, not to let motives of interest on the other side bear down his integrity and inclination to serve us. Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder.

I am, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 17 August, 1779.

Sir,

I enclose to your Excellency a list of officers proposed, after examination by General Duportail, for the com-

panies of sappers and miners. If Congress approve the nomination, I request that they will be pleased to direct commissions to be sent as speedily as possible. Enclosed is also a memorandum of the money, for which I have given warrants to Baron Steuben in the course of the present year; it amounts to a considerable sum more than his pay established by Congress. This is a subject which embarrasses me. It is reasonable that a man, devoting his time and services to the public, and by general consent a very useful one, should at least have his expenses borne. His established pay is certainly altogether inadequate to this. A large nominal sum goes but a little way. But, while there is a sum fixed by Congress, I am certainly not at liberty to exceed it; and though I have hitherto complied, from the indelicacy of a refusal to a foreigner, to a man of high rank, to one who is rendering the most indefatigable and beneficial services, yet I shall be under the necessity of discontinuing the practice. Neither could I recommend that a sufficient allowance should be formally determined; for though there may be less reason to expect foreigners than natives to make pecuniary sacrifices to this country, and though some of them may have no private resources so remote from home for their support, yet it would be difficult to reconcile our own officers to a measure, which would make so great and palpable a difference in the compensation for the respective services.

It is true, the Baron from the nature of his office will often have to travel from one part of the army to another, which will occasion extra expense and will justify an extra allowance. It is upon this principle, that my last warrant was granted, as he was just setting out on a journey to Providence. But perhaps the best mode to enable the Baron and others in his sit-

uation, to defray their necessary expenses in the service, may be to invest the Board of War with a discretionary power to grant such sums from time to time, as they shall judge reasonable, and proportioned to the circumstances of the persons. I take the liberty to suggest these hints, and have only to request, that Congress will be pleased to direct some mode, in which the difficulties I have pointed out may be remedied, consistent with the good of the service and justice to individuals. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

West Point, 21 August, 1779.

My Lord,

I have been duly favored with your letter of the 19th, written at nine o'clock in the morning, and that of the same date, of one o'clock in the afternoon, containing the agreeable information of Major Lee's having succeeded against Paulus Hook. I join my congratulations with your Lordship's on this occasion, and thank you for the effectual assistance afforded to Major Lee in completing the enterprise. The increase of confidence, which the army will derive from this affair and that of Stony Point, I flatter myself, though great, will be among the least of the advantages resulting from these events.

As the enemy must feel themselves disgraced by these losses, they may endeavour to lessen it by a retaliation in kind. It is natural to expect their attempts on such parts of the army as lie most exposed. This sentiment, I make no doubt, has occurred to your Lordship, and will of course proportion your vigilance to the nature of your situation, and to the danger which may

be apprehended. Your Lordship will be pleased to give my thanks to the officers and troops concerned in the capture of the garrison at Paulus Hook, for their good conduct and gallant behaviour on the occasion. The commissary of prisoners is directed to attend, and receive the British prisoners. I am, &c.*

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* Sir Henry Clinton had been disappointed in not receiving reinforcements from England, and he wrote, that the operations of the Americans had rendered utterly unsuitable the plan, to which the past movements of the campaign had only been preparatory. "I now find myself obliged by many cogent reasons," he said, "to abandon every view of making an effort in this quarter. The precautions, which General Washington has had leisure to take, make me hopeless of bringing him to a general action, and the season dissuades me strongly from losing time in the attempt." His thoughts were now turned to South Carolina, where the season would permit him to act by the 1st of October, and where there was reason to hope for assistance from the inhabitants, though less than at an earlier period of the war. "In order to give the effort a fair trial," he added, "it is necessary that the corps destined for that service should get there before Washington can throw any considerable reinforcement to the southward; also before any part of the French fleet shall have come upon the coast. I am therefore employing the army to perfect the defences of New York, which at all events must be left out of reach of any insult. I shall then give the enemy every jealousy at the eastward, and, without losing a moment, the expedition will proceed to South Carolina. Having seized on the posts of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point, with a view to offensive operations in this country, their principal importance will cease when that design is discarded; and, as without great reinforcements, which we cannot expect, nothing of consequence can be carried on again in this quarter, I shall probably abandon those posts; not having troops enough without hazard and difficulty to maintain them through the winter." — *MS. Letter to Lord George Germain, August 21st.*

In a letter dated seven days later than the above, the minister said; —"Much it behoves us to profit of every means and occasion to bring the American war to an honorable conclusion; for the powers Great Britain has to contend with in Europe are so potent, as to require her utmost efforts to withstand them. The King's magnanimity is not to be shaken by the nearness of danger, nor does the spirit of the nation shrink from the increase of its difficulties. Our cause is just, our counsels firm and decided, and we trust that the zealous and able exertions of our officers will, under the Divine favor, be crowned with success." — *Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, August 28th.*

TO PRESIDENT REED.

West Point, 22 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Tilghman delivered to me your favor of the 8th instant, for which, and the favorable sentiments expressed of me in your publication addressed to the printer of the *Maryland Journal*, you will permit me to offer my grateful acknowledgments. The loss of Fort Washington, simply abstracted from the circumstances which attended it, was an event that gave me much pain, because it deprived the army of the services of many valuable men at a critical period, and the public of many valuable lives, by the cruelties which were inflicted upon them in their captive state. But this concern received additional poignancy from two considerations, which did not appear; one of which will never be known to the world, because I shall never palliate my own faults by exposing those of another; nor indeed could either of them come before the public, unless there had been such a charge, as must have rendered an inquiry into the causes of this miscarriage necessary. The one was a non-compliance in General Greene with an order sent to him from White Plains, before I marched for the western side of Hudson's River, to withdraw the artillery and stores from the fort; allowing him, however, some latitude for the exercise of his own judgment, as he was upon the spot, and could decide better from appearances and circumstances than I, on the propriety of a total evacuation.* The other was a Resolve of Congress, in the strong and emphatical words following;

* See the letter here alluded to, and General Greene's reply, Vol. IV. p. 164.

"*October* 11*th*, 1776. — Resolved, That General Washington be desired, if it be practicable, by every art and at whatever expense, to obstruct effectually the navigation of the North River, between Fort Washington and Mount Constitution, as well to prevent the regress of the enemy's frigates lately gone up, as to hinder them from receiving succour."

When I came to Fort Lee, and found no measures taken towards an evacuation, in consequence of the order beforementioned; when I found General Greene, of whose judgment and candor I entertained a good opinion, decidedly opposed to it; when I found other opinions so coincident with his; when the wishes of Congress to obstruct the navigation of the North River, which were delivered in such forcible terms, recurred; when I knew that the easy communication between the different parts of the army, then separated by the river, depended upon it; and, lastly, when I considered that our policy led us to waste the campaign without coming to a general action on the one hand, or suffering the enemy to overrun the country on the other, I conceived that every impediment, that stood in their way, was a means to answer these purposes; — these, when thrown into the scale with those opinions, which were opposed to an evacuation, caused that warfare in my mind, and hesitation, which ended in the loss of the garrison; and, being repugnant to my own judgment of the advisableness of attempting to hold the post, filled me with the greater regret. The two great causes, which led to this misfortune, and which I have before recited, as well perhaps as my reasoning upon it, which occasioned the delay, were concealed from public view, and of course left the field of censure quite open for any and every laborer, who inclined to work in it; and afforded a fine theme for the pen of a malignant writer,

who is less regardful of facts than of the point he wants to establish, where he has the field wholly to himself, where concealment of a few circumstances answers his purposes, or where a small transposition of them will give a very different complexion to the same thing.

Why I have run into such a long discussion of this point, at this time, I am at a loss myself to tell. I meant but to touch it *en passant;* but one idea succeeded another, till it would seem, that I had been preparing my defence for a regular charge.*

My ideas of what seems to be the only mode left to keep our battalions to their establishment, or near it, you are already acquainted with, as they were conveyed at large to the committee at Valley Forge in 1778. I have seen no cause since to change my opinion on this head, but abundant reason to confirm it. No man dislikes short and temporary enlistments more than I do. No man ever had greater cause to reprobate the fatal policy of the measure than I have; no man (with decency) ever opposed it more, in the early part of this contest; and, had my advice respecting this matter been pursued, in the years 1775 and 1776, our money would have been upon a very different establishment, in point of credit, from what it now is, as we should have saved millions of pounds in bounty money, and the consequent evils of expiring armies and new levies. But those hours are passed, never to be recalled. Such men as compose the bulk of an army are in a different train of thinking from what they were in those early stages of the war; and nothing is now left but an annual and systematical mode of drafting,

* These remarks were caused by the tenor of Mr. Reed's letter, and by General Lee's *Queries* respecting the capture of Fort Washington, which were designed to cast blame and disparagement upon the Commander-in-chief.

which, while we retain the stamina of an army, engaged for the war, will be the best. I see no other substitute for voluntary enlistments. In fact it will come to this; for there are people now, old soldiers, who will hire themselves as substitutes, and the difference will be, that, in lieu of the public's emitting or borrowing money to pay the bounties, which increase rapidly every new enlistment, these bounties will be paid by individuals, will increase the demand for circulating cash, and, as with all other commodities in demand, raise the value of it by multiplying the means for using it. How far those governments, which are rent and weakened by internal divisions, have energy enough to carry statutes of this kind into execution, I do not pretend to be a competent judge; but such as are well established and organized I am sure can do it. As to those that are not, the propriety of the measure is so necessary and obvious, that I should entertain little doubt of their success in the experiment.

The sponge, which you say some gentlemen have talked of using, unless there can be a discrimination, and proper saving clauses provided, (and how far this is practicable I know not,) would be unjust and impolitic in the extreme. Perhaps I do not understand what they mean by using the sponge. If it be to sink the money in the hands of the holders of it, and at their loss, it cannot in my opinion stand justified upon any principles of common policy, common sense, or common honesty. But how far a man, for instance, who had possessed himself of twenty paper dollars by means of one, or the value of one, in specie, has a just claim upon the public for more than one of the latter in redemption, and in that ratio according to the periods of depreciation, I leave to those, who are better acquainted with the nature of the subject, and have more leisure

than I have, to discuss. To me a measure of this kind appears substantial justice to the public and to individuals; but whether it is capable of administration, I have never thought enough of it to form an opinion.

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 23 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency Major Lee's report of the surprise and capture of the garrison of Paulus Hook. The Major displayed a remarkable degree of prudence, address, enterprise, and bravery, upon this occasion, which does the highest honor to himself and to all the officers and men under his command. The situation of the post rendered the attempt critical and the success brilliant. It was made in consequence of information, that the garrison was in a state of negligent security, which the event has justified. I am much indebted to Lord Stirling for the judicious measures he took to forward the enterprise, and to secure the retreat of the party. Lieutenant McAllister, who will have the honor of delivering these despatches, will present Congress with the standard of the garrison, which fell into his possession during the attack. Major Lee speaks of this gentleman's conduct in the handsomest terms.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

P. S. The report not having been received till this day, prevented a speedier transmission. Major Lee

* A full account of this brave and successful enterprise may be seen in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. IV. p. 87.

mentions twenty men lost on our side. Captain Rudulph informs me, that, since the report was concluded, several of the missing had returned, which will lessen the supposed loss near one half.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, 23 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your report of the attack of Paulus Hook, transmitted by Captain Rudulph, which I have forwarded to Congress by Lieutenant McAllister. I shall be sorry if this should be contrary to your wish, or Captain Rudulph's expectation, as I have the best opinion of this gentleman's merit. My motives for sending Lieutenant McAllister with the despatches were, that he commanded a *forlorn hope*, and got possession of the standard. As custom required the sending of this to Congress, I thought the bearer of it ought to be the person, who had the good fortune to gain possession of it, especially as you had forwarded it by him to me; nor would it have been warranted by precedent to send one with the despatches, and another with the standard. You will find my sense of your conduct, and of that of the officers and men under your command, expressed in the general order of yesterday, and in my letter to Congress. I congratulate you on your success. You will send a small escort of dragoons with Lieutenant McAllister.

I am with great regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO JEREMIAH POWELL, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Head-Quarters, 26 August, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency a list of sundry officers belonging to your State, who have been in captivity and are reported by the commissary of prisoners as violators of parole. A conduct of this kind, so ignominious to the individuals themselves, so dishonorable to their country and to the service in which they have been engaged, and so injurious to those gentlemen, who were associated with them in misfortune, but preserved their honor, demands that every measure should be taken to deprive them of the benefit of their delinquency, and to compel their return. We have pledged ourselves to the enemy to do every thing in our power for this purpose; and in consequence I directed Mr. Beatty, the commissary of prisoners, to issue the summons, which you will probably have seen in the public papers. But as it is likely to have a very partial operation, I find it necessary, in aid of it, to request the interposition of the different States to enforce a compliance. The most of these persons never having been, and none of them now being, in the Continental service, military authority will hardly be sufficient to oblige them to leave their places of residence, and return to captivity against their inclination; neither will it be difficult for them to elude a military search, and keep themselves in concealment. I must therefore entreat, that your Excellency will be pleased to take such measures, as shall appear to you proper and effectual, to produce their immediate return. This will be rendering an essential service to our officers in general in captivity, and

will tend much to remove the difficulties, which now lie in the way of exchanges, and to discourage the practice of violating paroles in future. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 28 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

We have had so little said, and so few principles established, decisive of the propriety or impropriety of flags, or under what circumstances they are detainable, that it is no easy matter to give advice on this part of your letter. Should we apply to the practice of war, we shall find this very inconsistent with itself, regulated by a supposed necessity, opinion, or caprice. Sometimes it may be expedient to detain a flag, sent on the most justifiable occasion. At others, the most trifling business must be heard in order to preserve a like indulgence from the enemy, and prevent retaliation or recrimination on their part. In general, we can only defeat the enemy's intentions, in such flags as you have described, by our instructions to our officers on out-posts, and the prudence and caution of their reception. Should such instances occur, as that to Colonel Mead's militia, I think you will be perfectly justifiable in a detention of the flag. There is no objection to your using flags occasionally. The resolution of Congress, to which you allude, was to forbid officers commanding out-posts from suffering inhabitants or others going within the enemy's lines, unless by a written pass of the States to which they might belong.

If the enterprise in contemplation is to be undertaken at all, it must be executed immediately; but, if it is judged ineligible at this time, it must be relinquished.

The arrival of the enemy's reinforcement renders it necessary to compact our force more than it is at present; you will take your measures accordingly. Your movement is to the right, so far as to put you in a situation to form a junction with this army with despatch, and without being subject to interruption under almost any circumstances. This may be effected under the appearance of a forage. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, 1 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter of this date, "requesting me to give you in writing the instructions, which you verbally received from me on the subject of Paulus Hook, when you were last at head-quarters, and particularly concerning the immediate evacuation of the post after the reduction, and concerning the retreat."

When you were last at head-quarters, the enterprise against Paulus Hook was in contemplation, but not finally determined, as there were some points of information still to be more fully obtained. I gave you then, in general, my ideas of the manner in which it should be conducted, whenever attempted, and desired you to use your best endeavours to procure information in such matters, as appeared not to be sufficiently well understood, and mentioned the precautions that should be taken to cover the design, and secure the party, which might be employed in the enterprise, in its approach. But, with respect to the point to which your request more particularly extends, to wit, "the evacuation of the post, and concerning the retreat," my principal fear, from the moment I conceived a design

against the post, was on account of the retreat, founded on the relative situation of the post to that of the enemy on York Island. This circumstance induced me to add, that, in case the enterprise should be found eligible on farther inquiries, and determined on, no time should be lost, in case it succeeded, in attempting to bring off cannon, stores, or any other articles, as a few minutes' delay might expose the party at least to imminent risk. I further recollect, that I likewise said, that no time should be spent, in such case, in collecting stragglers of the garrison, who might skulk and hide themselves, lest it should prove fatal; also that, if the post could not be carried in an instant by surprise, the attempt must be relinquished. My objects were to surprise it, to bring off the garrison immediately, and to effect a secure retreat. I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

West Point, 3 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter, accompanied by those from the general officers, and have carefully considered their respective contents. The subject is of such a nature, that I should have thought it advisable not to bring it to a formal investigation; but, since it has been done, I shall give you my opinion now with candor and explicitness.

When you accepted the quartermaster-general's department, and made a reservation of your rank, I considered it as intended to prevent the operation of a certain resolve of Congress, "declaring that no Continental officer should hold more than one commission at a time," and to obviate any future doubt of your

right to resume your proper station in the line, on the resignation of this office. It was not in my opinion understood, that you were to retain an actual permanent command, a proof of which is, that you immediately relinquished your division, and have continued out of command ever since, except upon two occasions of an extraordinary nature and by special appointment. My idea was, that you were to stand precisely upon the same footing, in proportion to your rank, as quartermaster-generals in other services, who, from the best information I have been able to obtain, do not usually exercise a regular lineal command, but are eligible by order of the officer at the head of the army to occasional commands, either on detachment or in the line, when, in his opinion, it is for the good of the service to employ them in this manner, and it does not interfere with the duties of the department, or with the particular and proper command of other officers. Upon this principle you were appointed to the right wing in the affair of Monmouth, and were sent to take a command under General Sullivan, and both, as far as I have ever heard, were agreeable to the general sense of the army. To attempt a more precise definition of the cases, in which you may be invested with actual command, might only lead to misapprehension, discontent on one side or another, embarrassing discussions, and perhaps confusion.

The military reason, which prevents a quartermaster-general from exercising command in ordinary cases, I take to be this, that, whatever may be the fact, the presumption is, that both in action and out of action he has, generally speaking, sufficient employment in the duties of his office, and circumstances alone can decide when these are compatible with actual command.

The good opinion I have of your abilities and qualifications will make me take pleasure in giving you opportunities of rendering service and acquiring military honor in the field, as often as it can be done consistently with propriety, the good of the service, and the reasonable pretensions of other officers. The experience you have already had may satisfy you of my disposition. You have participated in the only two transactions of importance, which have happened since your appointment, in which the whole or a considerable portion of the army has been concerned; but I could not undertake to draw any line, which should determine the particular instances.

You ask several questions respecting your conduct in your present department, your manner of entering it, and the services you have rendered. I remember that the proposal for your appointment originated with the committee of arrangement, and was first suggested to me by them; that, in the conversations I had with you upon the subject, you appeared reluctantly to undertake the office, and, in one of them, offered to discharge the military duties of it without compensation for the space of a year; and I verily believe that a regard to the service, not pecuniary emolument, was the prevailing motive to your acceptance. In my opinion, you have executed the trust with ability and fidelity.

The services you have rendered the army have been important, and such as have gained my entire approbation, which I have not failed to express on more than one occasion to Congress, in strong and explicit terms. The sense of the army on this head, I believe, concurs with mine. I think it not more than justice to you to say, that I am persuaded you have uniformly exerted yourself to second my measures and

our operations in general, in the most effectual manner, which the public resources and the circumstances of the times would permit.

But with the fullest allowance for your services, on the most liberal scale of compensation, I cannot but think the construction I have given to your pretensions to command is just and ample. Your own feelings must determine whether it is satisfactory. It corresponds with my sentiments of military propriety, and is, I believe, analogous to the customary practice of armies, which is the best standard in all cases of this kind, so far as it does not contravene any positive constitution. I think, too, it is most agreeable to the sense of a majority of the general officers, whom you have consulted. If it differs from your own, I shall regret what it is not in my power to avoid.

I am with great esteem and regard, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

West Point, 7 September, 1779.

SIR,

The current of intelligence from New York makes the late reinforcement under Arbuthnot amount to about three thousand troops, principally recruits, and rather in an unhealthy situation. It also speaks of preparations for an expedition, and some recent rumors point to the southern States, though the enemy have thrown out menaces against this post. If the reinforcement does not exceed this estimate, they may not think themselves able to operate effectually this way; in which case, the unpromising situation of their affairs may tempt them to make an effort to get hold of some of the southern States, to counterbalance their losses in

the West Indies, and favor negotiations in the winter. They have been for some time past fortifying across New York Island, and it is said are going to erect a strong work at Brooklyn on Long Island. All this may be, to have it in their power to secure their present posts with a small force, and make large detachments with the greater confidence.* A part may go to the West Indies, and a considerable number still be spared for the purpose I am supposing; the more so, if Rhode Island, which is now become to them a very inferior object, should be evacuated.

An apprehension of the Spaniards may be an objection to this plan; but they may not be deterred by this danger, from the probability that the Spaniards will rather direct their attention to Jamaica than to this continent; besides which, if they have a large force operating in the southern States, it may easily enough be turned to the defence of their own possessions that way; or, if these should be lost, they will be amply compensated by the full acquisition of Georgia and South Carolina, both of which are so weak as to be in no small danger.† I take the liberty to suggest

* That this was actually the plan may he seen by an extract from Sir Henry Clinton's letter above, p. 327.

† The declaration of Spain against England seems to have given rise to large projects in Congress. A proposition was made to authorize an American plenipotentiary to conclude a joint treaty of alliance between France, Spain, and the United States, on condition that France and Spain should guaranty the Floridas to the United States, and also the free navigation of the Mississippi, Canada, Nova Scotia, and the fisheries. Should this be declined, the plenipotentiary should propose, on the part of the United States, to guaranty to Spain the Floridas, the Bahama Islands, in case they should be conquered, and the navigation of the Mississippi, on condition that France and Spain would guaranty Canada and Nova Scotia to the United States. These points were warmly debated. — *M. Gerard to Count Vergennes, September 10th.*

M. Gerard added, that the news of Spain having declared war against England produced great excitement and joy in America. He feared the

these hints, as it seems to me to be the part of prudence to be upon our guard against a plan of this nature, and to take every precaution in our power to disappoint its success. By a letter I have received from General Lincoln, his force is insignificant, and his prospects of an addition feeble. No exertions should be omitted to make them better.

Though our force here is far from making a diminution desirable, yet, as I think we have more to apprehend to the southward than in this quarter, if Congress should be in favor of sending the two North Carolina regiments that way, I should hope they might now be spared without material injury. The distance is a very discouraging circumstance, but the troops shall be in readiness to move the moment the pleasure of Congress is known. I have the honor to enclose the copy of a letter, which I have just received from General Sullivan, and to congratulate Congress on the agreeable and important success it announces.*

I have the honor to be, &c.

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influence would not be salutary to the common cause. It was now thought, that such strong forces were brought to bear upon England, as would compel that power to yield to moderate terms. There had always been in Congress a small party for continuing the war, and this party was now much strengthened, because the burden of the war would be chiefly borne by France and Spain. This state of things encouraged the Americans to make larger demands, suggest new conquests, and look forward to the probability of driving the English wholly from the continent. On these points there was a new organization of parties. The one opposed to the French alliance ranged itself on the side, which sought a continuance of the war, and a demand for better terms in a treaty of peace; and the prospects of this triple alliance against England were too seducing not to bring over many to that side, who had before taken other grounds. Another ill effect was, that, just in proportion as accessions to the means of opposing the enemy were afforded by foreign powers, the Americans became inactive and backward in their own efforts.

* Giving an account of an action fought against the Indians and Tories at Newtown. See Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. IV. p. 106.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

West Point, 7 September, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

It really appears impossible to reconcile the conduct Britain is pursuing, to any system of prudence or policy. For the reasons you assign, appearances are against her deriving aid from other powers; and, if it be truly the case, that she has rejected the mediation of Spain, without having made allies, it will exceed all past instances of her infatuation.* Notwithstanding appearances, I can hardly bring myself fully to believe, that it is the case; or that there is so general a combination against the interests of Britain among the European powers, as will permit them to endanger the political balance. I think it probable enough, that the conduct of France in the affairs of the Porte and Russia will make an impression on the Empress; but I

* Mr. Jay, President of Congress, had written as follows; "Britain refused the mediation of Spain at a time, when their spirits were elated by their successes in the West Indies and the southern States, and by the accounts they received of discord in Congress, discontent among the people, and a prospect of the evils with which we were threatened by the depreciation of our currency. Deceived by these illusory gleams of hope, they permitted their counsels to be guided by their pride. What reason they may have to expect succour from other powers is as yet a secret. M. Gerard is decided in his opinion, that they will obtain none. The conduct of France in establishing peace between Russia and the Porte has won the heart of the Empress; and the influence of Versailles at Constantinople will probably give duration to her gratitude. The Emperor and Russia are under similar obligations. The latter wishes us well, and the finances of the former are too much exhausted to support the expense of a war without subsidies from Britain, who at present cannot afford them. There is no reason to suspect, that the peace of Germany will soon be interrupted. Britain may hire some troops there, but it is not probable she will be able to do more. Portugal and the Dutch, while directed by their interest, will not rashly raise their hands to support a nation, which, like a tower in an earthquake, sliding from its base, will crush every slender prop that may be raised to prevent its fall." — *August 25th.*

doubt whether it will be sufficient to counterbalance the powerful motives she has to support England; and the Porte has been perhaps too much weakened in the last war with Russia to be over fond of renewing it. The Emperor is also the natural ally of England, notwithstanding the connexions of blood between his family and that of France; and he may prefer reasons of national policy to those of private attachment. It is true, his finances may not be in the best state, though one campaign could hardly have exhausted them; but, as Holland looks up to him for her chief protection, if he should be inclined to favor England, it may give her counsels a decided bias the same way. She can easily supply what is wanting in the article of money, and by this aid give sinews to that confederacy. Denmark is also the natural ally of England; and, though there has been lately a family bickering, her political interest may outweigh private animosity. Her marine assistance would be considerable. Portugal, too, though timid and cautious at present, if she were to see connexions formed by England, able to give her countenance and security, would probably declare for her interests. Russia, Denmark, the Emperor, Holland, Portugal, and England would form a respectable counterpoise to the opposite scale. Though all the maritime powers of Europe were interested in the independence of this country, as it tends to diminish the overgrown power of Britain, yet they may be unwilling to see too great a preponderance on the side of her rivals; and when the question changes itself, from the separation of America to the ruin of England as a naval power, I should not be surprised at a proportionable change in the sentiments of some of those states, which have been heretofore unconcerned spectators, or inclining to our side. I suggest these things rather as possible

than probable. It is even to be expected, that the decisive blow will be struck before the interposition of the allies, which England may acquire, can have effect. But still, as possible events, they ought to have their influence, and prevent our relaxing in any measures necessary for our safety, on the supposition of a speedy peace, or removal of the war from the present theatre in America.

The account, which Mr. Wharton received, of the reinforcement, which came with Admiral Arbuthnot, corresponds pretty well, in respect to numbers, with the best information I have been able to obtain upon the subject. Some recent advices make it about three thousand, and say, that these troops are rather in a sickly condition. It is generally said, that they are recruits; but whether there is so great a proportion of the Scotch, as his intelligence mentions, is not ascertained by any accounts I have received.*

* Notwithstanding the reinforcements that were coming to America, and the determination of the ministry to prosecute the war with vigor, Sir Henry Clinton began to be weary of the service; and in fact he had already solicited his recall.

"I must beg leave to express," said he in writing to Lord George Germain, "how happy I am made by the return of Lord Cornwallis to this country. His Lordship's indefatigable zeal, his knowledge of the country, his profound abilities, and the high estimation in which he is held by this army, must naturally give me the warmest confidence and efficient support from him in every undertaking, which opportunity may prompt and other circumstances allow. But his presence affords me another source of satisfaction. When there is upon the spot an officer every way qualified to have the interests of his country entrusted to him, I should hope that I might without difficulty be relieved from a station, which nobody acquainted with its conditions will suppose to have sat lightly upon me. To say truth, my Lord, my spirits are worn out by struggling against the consequences of many adverse incidents, which, without appearing publicly to account for my situation, have effectually oppressed me. To enumerate them would be a painful and unnecessary, perhaps an improper task.

"At the same time, let me add, my Lord, that, were I conscious my particular efforts were necessary to his Majesty's service, no circum-

With respect to the person you recommended last winter, he was employed in consequence, and I have not the smallest doubt of his attachment and integrity. But he has not had it in his power, and indeed it is next to impossible that any one should, circumstanced as he is, to render much essential service in the way it was intended to employ him. You will readily conceive the difficulties in such a case. The business was of too delicate a nature for him to transact it frequently himself, and the characters, to whom he has been obliged occasionally to confide it, have not been able to gain any thing satisfactory or material. Indeed, I believe it will seldom happen, that a person, acting in this way, can render any essential advantages more than once or twice at any rate; and what he will be compelled to do, to preserve the pretended confidence of the other party, will generally counterbalance any thing he may effect. The greatest benefits are to be derived from persons, who live with the other side; whose local circumstances, without subjecting them to suspicions,

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stances of private feeling would raise within me a single wish of retiring from the command. That however is not the case; for I do seriously give it as my opinion, that if the endeavours of any man are likely, under our present prospects, to be attended with success, Lord Cornwallis for many reasons stands among the first. Thus circumstanced, and convinced that the force under my command at present, or that will be during this campaign, is not equal to the services expected of me, I must earnestly request your Lordship to lay before his Majesty my humble supplication, that he will permit me to resign the command of this army to Lord Cornwallis." — *New York, August 20th.*

General Clinton considered it peculiarly unfortunate, that he had taken the command at a very unfavorable time, just as the war broke out with France, when it was necessary to weaken his army, and when reinforcements were withheld for other service. The Spanish war soon followed, which diminished still more the aid he had expected; yet the world was looking for successes from him, and could not judge of the disabilities under which he labored. The minister replied, that the King entirely approved General Clinton's conduct in his command, and declined accepting his resignation.

give them an opportunity of making observations, and comparing and combining things and sentiments. It is with such I have endeavoured to establish a correspondence, and on their reports I shall most rely. From these several considerations I am doubtful, whether it will be of any advantage for the person to continue longer in the way he has acted. The points, to which he must have alluded in his letter, were the movements up the North River, and against Charleston, and the expedition to Virginia. I believe the first certain information of the first of these events came from him. He has never received any thing from me. The gentleman, who employed him first, had some money deposited with him for confidential purposes; but I cannot tell how much he may have paid him. With every sentiment of esteem, regard, and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MONSIEUR GERARD.

West Point, 12 September, 1779.

SIR,

The Baron de Kalb did me the honor some days ago to communicate a letter he had received from your Excellency, which flattered us with the hope of seeing you here before your departure for France. I am since told by the Baron, that you have changed your intention of coming this way. In this I feel myself deprived of a great pleasure. I cannot, however, permit you to leave these States, without giving you a fresh testimony of my cordial attachment and esteem, at the same time that I offer my sincere congratulations on the glorious and important successes of his Most Christian Majesty's arms, under the direction of the

Count d'Estaing; and my most fervent wishes for the continuance of them.

America is indebted to your early and zealous offices in her favor; to that generous and uniform attention to the interests of both countries, by which your administration is distinguished.* You carry with you the affections of a whole people, and leave behind you a reputation, which will have the peculiar fortune to be every where admired by good men. Permit me now to wish you a safe and agreeable passage, and a happy meeting with your lady and friends; and I pray you to do me the justice to believe, that no man is more deeply impressed with these sentiments, or entertains a higher esteem, respect, and regard for your Excellency, than, Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

West Point, 12 September, 1779.

My dear Marquis,

Often since you left this country I have written to you, but have not been favored with a single line from you since you lay in Boston harbour. This I shall ascribe to any cause, rather than a decline of friendship. I feel my own regard for you so sensibly, that I shall never suspect a want of it in your breast. I intended to write you a very long letter by Monsieur Gerard, whom I have been expecting at this place on his way to Boston for two days past; but I am this instant

* M. Gerard had been Secretary to the King's Council, and was the principal person concerned in negotiating the treaties of alliance and commerce with Franklin and the other American commissioners. Mr. Jay said of him, in a letter to Governor Clinton, "He seems better acquainted with republics, than almost any man I have ever known." — *October 7th.*

informed, that he either has embarked or is on the very point of embarking at Philadelphia. Not choosing that he should go without carrying some testimony of my constant remembrance of you, I do in much haste scribble these lines.

Most sincerely, my dear Marquis, do I congratulate you on the great and glorious exploits of Count d'Estaing in the West Indies; the bright prospect of European affairs; and our little successes in America; the last of which, though small on the great scale, will nevertheless weigh in the balance. By our little successes I mean the storming of Stony Point and the surprise of Paulus Hook (within cannon-shot of New York), and capture of the garrisons, the first amounting to six hundred men, the other to two hundred; driving the enemy out of South Carolina; and the defeat of the Indians; of which last event I have within these few days received an account from General Sullivan, who is now in the heart of their country with four thousand men, and informs me, that on the 29th ultimo he advanced to their intrenchments, at a place called Newtown, where the warriors of seven nations, some regulars and Tories, commanded by the two Butlers, Brant, and a Captain McDonald, had been assembled eight days to oppose him. The position was well chosen and their disposition well made; but on finding themselves hard pushed in front, and their left flank in danger of being turned, they fled in great confusion and disorder and with much precipitation, leaving their packs, camp-kettles, trinkets, and many arms on the ground, and eleven warriors dead, whom they could not get off. The prisoners say, that their slain and wounded were carried off during the action on horses and in canoes. Our loss was trifling; in the whole, to the date of his letter, under a hundred killed and

wounded, although he had destroyed fourteen towns, large and most flourishing crops of corn, pulse, and the like. He was proceeding in his plan of chastisement, and will convince them, it is to be hoped, of two things; first, that their cruelties are not to pass with impunity; and, secondly, that they have been instigated to arms and acts of barbarism by a nation, which is unable to protect them, and of consequence has left them to that correction, which is due to their villany.

The Bostonians have made an unfortunate expedition to a place called Penobscot, where a body of about eight hundred men from Halifax, under the command of Brigadier-General McLean, had made a lodgment, as is supposed, for the purpose of getting masts and spars for their shipping. This armament from the Massachusetts Bay, consisting altogether of militia, went there to dispossess them, but were so dilatory in their operations, that the appearing of Sir George Collier, with a superior naval force, occasioned the destruction (by themselves) of all their shipping, and the troops to get off as well as they could by land. Add to this, the conflagration of Fairfield, Norwalk, and New Haven, by the intrepid and magnanimous Tryon, who, in defiance of all the opposition that could be given by the women and children, inhabitants of these towns, performed this notable exploit with two thousand brave and generous Britons, adding thereby fresh lustre to their arms and dignity to their King.

Admiral Arbuthnot, with about three or four thousand troops, is arrived at New York, and will, it is to be presumed, afford Sir Henry Clinton an opportunity of displaying his intentions or orders. I every moment look for the Chevalier de la Luzerne on his way from Boston to Congress. By him, I please myself with the hope of receiving a letter from you. If I am disap-

pointed in this, I shall assuredly hear from you. I have spun my letter to a much greater length than I expected, and as Monsieur La Colombe is waiting, I will only detain him, while I can add that, with every sentiment of esteem, regard, and affection,

I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO JOHN BEATTY, COMMISSARY-GENERAL OF PRISONERS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 23 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your report of your transactions with Mr. Loring, on the subject of exchanges. Mr. Loring's answer to your first proposition revives the old question of a composition of privates for officers, which has been so repeatedly and so fruitlessly agitated, and which can now only tend to embarrass the relief of the prisoners on both sides. It seems, that the more we do to remove the obstacles in the way of exchanges, the more solicitous the enemy are to contrive new ones, and revive the old; as if they at length expected to fatigue us into compliance with their unreasonable demands. I know not with what face of justice or decency they can depart, whenever it suits a particular interest, from all those principles, which have been agreed on between us, and have uniformly governed our exchanges. The only established rule of exchange hitherto has been, "officer for officer of equal rank, and soldier for soldier." The settled disinclination of the enemy to fixing general and permanent rules, adequate to all the cases of captivity, have obliged us to content ourselves with partial and particular exchanges; and, from every thing that has appeared, their ideas are so remote from

ours, that there is little reason to expect any future negotiation would be attended with more success than the past, or that we should ever be able to unite in a tariff, which would have no other object than the relief of prisoners on terms of equal advantage. While this continues a secondary motive with the enemy, and the augmentation of their force by a large accession of privates the ruling one, nothing of that kind can be expected. If we, therefore, renounce particular exchanges on the former plan, the prisoners will have no other prospect before them, than that of hopeless captivity.

I would wish you, in your answer to Mr. Loring, to represent these things to him in a decent but pointed manner, to make him sensible of the inconsistency of his conduct, and the ill-consequences it must produce; informing him at the same time, that we will not hereafter make any exchanges whatsoever, unless they extend to officers and privates indiscriminately, on the footing which has heretofore obtained. The instructions I have already given you, on the subject of composition, are not to be exceeded; and I would wish the question of privates for officers to be avoided, as I am certain, from the unreasonableness of the enemy on this head, that it can answer no other purpose, than to perplex and impede the business. If in treating of a tariff, Mr. Loring persists in pressing Conway's cartel as a model, he can be very justly told, that the circumstances of the parties in the present war differ much from those of France and England, at the time of that treaty, and that these afford the only proper standard by which to regulate our agreements.

You will insist on your second proposition, informing the enemy, that this mode is not with reference to their wishes, but to discourage the practice of breaking pa-

roles, and establish a distinction between the violators and scrupulous observers; that their interest can be no way affected by it, and consequently they can have no reasonable objection. As to the third answer, you will explicitly inform them, that I have nothing to do with those persons, not military prisoners, who have broken their paroles, either to exchange or return them; that I do not consider them proper subjects of military capture, in the first instance, nor hold myself bound to restore them to a state of captivity, in which they were first placed, contrary to the usages of nations.

Colonel Webb's exchange by composition we cannot claim as a matter of right, but I wish every method in our power to be taken to induce the enemy to consent to it. The pretext of not being willing to continue partial exchanges is forced; the more so, as there are such recent instances in the cases of Edmondston and Featherstone. You must plead the constant practice heretofore; the generous treatment shown to the prisoners taken in the Eagle; the obligation upon the enemy, in point of honor and justice, to return an equivalent; and the proposals, which they themselves have made at different times for particular exchanges by composition. You will observe to them, that the gentlemen taken in the Eagle are not under a parole, but absolutely released and at liberty to act; that by an authentic act of their consul at Corunna they have incurred a debt, which they cannot without a flagrant breach of faith refuse to pay; that the exchange, so far as it depends on us, is already made, and that they have no choice but to make a return. You will demand an explanation of what they mean by "the former principle"; whether it is, that they are ready to return an equal number, of equal ranks, on the *former principle of equality of rank*, or whether they refuse to make a

return for these, unless the terms of their first proposition are complied with. After you have prepared your answer in the spirit of these instructions, you will let me have a view of it. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 24 September, 1779.

SIR,

It is not my opinion, that Culper Junior* should be advised to give up his present employment. I should imagine, that with a little industry he will be able to carry on his intelligence with greater security to himself, and greater advantages to us, under cover of his usual business, than if he were to dedicate himself wholly to the giving of information. It may afford him opportunities of collecting intelligence, that he could not obtain so well in any other manner. It also prevents those suspicions, which might become natural, should he throw himself out of the line of his present employment. He may rest assured of every proper attention being paid to his services. One thing appears to me deserving of his particular consideration, as it will not only render his communication less exposed to detection, but relieve the fears of such persons as may be entrusted with its conveyance to the second link in the chain, and of course very much facilitate the object we have in view; I mean, that he should occasionally write his information on the blank leaves of a pamphlet, on the first, second, and other leaves of a common pocket-book, or on the blank leaves at the end of registers, almanacs, or any new publication or book of small value. He should be determined in the choice of these

* The fictitious name of a spy in New York.

books principally by the goodness of the blank paper, as the ink is not easily legible unless it is on paper of good quality. Having settled a plan of this kind with his friend, he may forward them without risk of search, or the scrutiny of the enemy, as this is chiefly directed against paper made up in the form of letters.

I would add a further hint on this subject. Even letters may be made more subservient to this communication, than they have yet been. He may write a familiar letter on domestic affairs, or on some little matters of business, to his friend at Satauket or elsewhere, interlining with the stain his secret intelligence, or writing it on the opposite blank side of the letter. But that his friend may know how to distinguish these from letters addressed solely to himself, he may always leave such as contain secret information without date or place (dating it with the stain), or fold them up in a particular manner, which may be concerted between the parties. This last appears to be the best mark of the two, and may be the signal of their being designed for me. The first mentioned mode, however, or that of the books, appears to me the one least liable to detection. I am, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN LAURENS.

West Point, 28 September, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I shall consider myself happy to see you again in that character, in which you are pleased to subscribe yourself, whenever the object that drew you to Carolina may cease to be a motive for your continuing there, or will permit you to rejoin your old associates here. In this let me entreat you to believe me most sincere.

Some late movements of the enemy have given rise to a variety of suggestions. Four regiments have already sailed from New York; and a still more considerable embarkation is on foot, in which is included a body of their cavalry. All reasoning on the destination of these troops will be no better than conjecture. If we should suppose a plan formed by the British cabinet for this year's campaign, the events which have since taken place in Europe, in the West Indies, and on this continent, may have rendered its full execution impracticable, and made it expedient for their commander here either to suspend its operation till further instructed, or to act according to the exigencies of the moment, if he is not acting under absolute orders. Perhaps it is fortunate for the interests of your State, and the continent at large, that the success of all plans depends on matters beyond the control of their projectors. Since the report of the Count d'Estaing's fleet having been near our coast, the enemy appear rather embarrassed. Should this report prove true, I leave the effects it may produce in our favor to your own conjectures.

By this time I expect General Sullivan will have completed the entire destruction of the whole settlements of the Six Nations, excepting those of the Oneidas, and such other friendly towns as have merited a different treatment. He had, by my last advices of the 9th instant, penetrated beyond their middle settlements, had burned between fifteen and twenty towns, destroyed all their crops, and was advancing to their exterior villages; the Indians, men, women, and children flying before him to Niagara, distant more than one hundred miles, in the utmost consternation, distress, and confusion, with the Butlers, Brant, and others at their head. Wishing the most satisfactory issue

of your endeavours, and much health to enjoy the good name you have acquired, I am, dear Sir, very sincerely yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

West Point, 28 September, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 8th of July, with that pleasure which we always experience in hearing from those for whom we have a real esteem. The details you give me of your attack upon Stono Ferry are obliging and satisfactory; and "though all was not done which you wished," I have no doubt that the attempt had a good effect, and at least accelerated the retreat of the enemy. It did no discredit to our arms, even by their own accounts.

I am chagrined at the delays, which the intended succours from Virginia have met with. I hope, however, they may still arrive in time to be useful, and that you may not be disappointed in your other operations. Notwithstanding the embarrassed situation of the enemy, I am far from being satisfied that they will not make another and more vigorous effort to the southward this campaign. They have very powerful motives to it. The full possession of Georgia and the acquisition of South Carolina would be a good counterpoise to their losses in the Islands. It would give credit to their cause in Europe, favor negotiations in the winter, or help to gain friends for a further prosecution of the war. It would also open new sources of supplies, of which they now stand in need, both on the continent and in the West Indies, from the superiority in the English channel, which the junction of

Spain must have produced, and the restraints it will impose upon exportations from England and Ireland. I see no better purpose to which they can apply their army in America. Inferior in naval force in the Islands, they cannot think of recovering those they have lost, or of acquiring others. To garrison and preserve the remainder seems to be all that they can reasonably have in view. If they make a detachment of four or five thousand men, in addition to the troops already there, it will in my opinion be sufficient for the purpose. Then, by evacuating Rhode Island, they may spare three or four thousand more for operations in your quarter, and keep a garrison of nine or ten thousand men for the defence of New York and its dependencies, which, from its particular shape and insular situation, and the works they have raised and are raising, would be pretty well out of the reach of any enterprise on our part, without the coöperation of a fleet.*

* The British General had determined on an expedition to Carolina, and was making preparations for it, when intelligence arrived from Governor Dalling at Jamaica, that he was in great apprehension for that Island, and requested immediate succour. Sir Henry Clinton did not hesitate a moment in determining to send every possible assistance. Lord Cornwallis offered himself to take command of the land forces, and sailed in consequence on the 24th of September, with four thousand men, and all the line-of-battle ships. It was not possible to give instructions for such an enterprise. The safety of Jamaica was the first object; the protection of Pensacola the next; and the reduction of New Orleans the third, should events render it advisable. The detachment was then to join the army at Savannah. In this state of things it was impracticable to send any forces to South Carolina. This latter expedition could only be effected by withdrawing the troops from Rhode Island. Admiral Arbuthnot proposed to visit that post, and consider the expediency of an evacuation. Should that be deemed advisable, then four thousand men might be sent to the south, and although they would not reach their destination so soon by six weeks as was proposed, yet there was reason to believe they would arrive in time to be advantageously employed; but, should the French or Spaniards throw in forces, nothing more than the defence of Georgia could be expected. — *MS. Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, September 26th.*

The possibility of aid of this kind will indeed be an objection to the measure I am supposing; and the ideas of the enemy under their present discouragements may perhaps more naturally embrace plans rather of security than conquest. But upon the whole, the probability of the latter is sufficiently great to require every precaution on our side. Southern operations appear to have been for some time past a favorite object in the British cabinet. The weakness of the southern States affords a strong temptation; the advantages are important and inviting; and even the desperate aspect of their affairs itself may inspire a spirit of enterprise and teach the necessity of some bold stroke to counterbalance their misfortunes and disgraces, and to restore their reputation and influence.

The enclosed extracts contain, substantially, the most authentic intelligence I have received of the enemy's motions and designs. You will perceive that they are making large detachments, and that the southern States are spoken of as a principal object. The particular corps, too, which are mentioned, point that way. They would not separate their grenadiers and light infantry, but for some important *coup de main;* and this I imagine is the manner in which they would proceed against Charleston. Nor do I see where, except with you, they can intend to employ their cavalry. But there may be a mistake in this part of the intelligence, from the difficulty of ascertaining corps with precision; and some movements among those, which are specified, may have occasioned a deception. A variety of correspondent accounts of late has led us to a belief, that Count d'Estaing sailed from the Cape early in August, bound to some part of this continent. From the direction he took when an American vessel parted with him, on the 23d of August, Georgia, or St.

Augustine, or both, were supposed to be his destination. If this was the case, you must have had knowledge of his operations long since; but a vessel, just arrived at the eastward, amuses us with a story of having seen him in the latitude of Bermuda, where it is said he took the captain of this vessel on board as a pilot. The period of time, to which this event is referred, is the 10th instant; but the Count has not yet made his appearance on this coast. Perhaps the winds, which have been contrary, have retarded him. Perhaps Halifax is the point to which his attention is directed; or perhaps the whole tale is a contrivance; though it comes to me with strong circumstances of probability. I have no doubt that you will make every exertion in your power to be prepared for the worst; and I hope you will be effectually seconded by the States immediately interested, and which alone are near enough to give you the necessary succour. It is to be lamented, that the distance and other circumstances are insurmountable barriers to support from any part of the troops here. With the truest esteem and regard, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 30 September, 1779.

SIR,

The irregularities and injuries, which have been committed against the inhabitants of Long Island, and of other places in the possession of the enemy, by persons who professed to have no other views than these men profess, as your Excellency observes, have been exceedingly great; and I do not believe it will be possible to prevent a repetition of them, but by wholly discountenancing and prohibiting the business in the

manner your Excellency has already done, or that any line of discrimination can be established. But however this might be, I have no alternative in the case, Congress having enjoined it in a particular manner on all the officers of the army to use their exertions to prevent the parties from going to Long Island, or other places in the possession of the enemy, under the idea of seizing or destroying Tory property. The distinction between Whig and Tory, friend and foe, is so easily set up, especially where it is the interest of such parties to do it, that even many of our best and fast friends, under the pretext of their being of the latter sort, have had their property wrested from them in the most unjustifiable, cruel, and impolitic manner.

I received last night a South Carolina paper, by which it appears, that an officer of Count d'Estaing's had arrived at Charleston with despatches, announcing that the Count and his fleet were near that coast.* I flatter myself our next advices from thence will inform us, that his Excellency has struck some important and interesting stroke against the enemy in the southern quarter. I have the honor to be, &c.

* The same intelligence reached the British Admiral at New York two or three days earlier. It was inferred by him and Sir Henry Clinton, that an attack upon New York was the object in contemplation, and the armament under Cornwallis, which had already sailed for Jamaica, was ordered back. The fleet assembled again in the harbour, and the troops were disembarked.

The Admiral's suggestion to abandon Rhode Island had been considered. Besides the expedition to Carolina, a descent in the Chesapeake was meditated, which would require two thousand men. These could hardly be spared, after having sent two thousand to Canada, without drawing off the forces from Rhode Island. The Admiral was about to sail for that place, and examine into the matter, when the news of Count d'Estaing's movements at the South reached New York. There were additional motives for the evacution of Rhode Island. Sir Henry Clinton looked upon that post to be quite unessential in the land operations of the war, and the Admiral deemed it equally unimportant in respect to the

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

West Point, 30 September, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

A few days ago I wrote you a letter in much haste. Since that, I have been honored with the company of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, and by him was favored with your obliging letter of the 12th of June, which filled me with equal pleasure and surprise; the latter at hearing that you had not received one of the many letters I had written to you since you left the American shore. It gave me infinite pleasure to hear, from yourself, of the favorable reception you met with from your sovereign, and of the joy, which your safe arrival in France had diffused among your friends. I had no doubt, that this would be the case. To hear it from yourself adds pleasure to the account; and here, my dear friend, let me congratulate you on your new, honorable, and pleasing appointment in the army commanded by the Count de Vaux, which I shall accompany with an assurance, that none can do it with more warmth of affection, or sincere joy, than myself. Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty; your singular attachment to this infant world; your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America, but since your return to France, to serve the United States; your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for *me*, have ripened the first impres-

navy, and considered its fate involved in that of New York. Threatened as the latter place was at present, not a ship could be spared for the defence of the former. Such were the forcible reasons for rescuing the garrison and stores at Rhode Island from an unprotected state, and giving security to the harbour of New York. Orders were sent to General Prescott to evacuate the post without delay, and transports and other vessels were despatched for the purpose. — *MS. Letter from Sir Henry Clinton, September 30th.*

sions of esteem and attachment, which I imbibed for you, into such perfect love and gratitude, as neither time nor absence can impair. This will warrant my assuring you, that, whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen, if circumstances should require this, whether as a major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know you can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with *us* in such rural entertainment and amusements, I can undertake, in behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do every thing in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the Marchioness. My inclination and endeavours to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you, that I love every body that is dear to you, and consequently participate in the pleasure you feel in the prospect of again becoming a parent, and do most sincerely congratulate you and your lady on this fresh pledge she is about to give you of her love.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken and your polite attention, in favoring me with a copy of your letter to Congress; and feel, as I am persuaded they must do, the force of such ardent zeal as you therein express for the interest of this country. The propriety of the hint you have given them must carry conviction, and I trust will have a salutary effect; though there is not, I believe, the same occasion for the admonition now, that there was several months ago. Many late

changes have taken place in that honorable body, which have removed in a very great degree, if not wholly, the discordant spirit which, it is said, prevailed in the winter; and I hope measures will also be taken to remove those unhappy and improper differences, which have extended themselves elsewhere, to the prejudice of our affairs in Europe.

I have had great pleasure in the visit, which the Chevalier de la Luzerne and Monsieur Marbois did me the honor to make at this camp; concerning both of whom I have imbibed the most favorable impressions, and I thank you for the honorable mention you made of me to them. The Chevalier, till he had announced himself to Congress, did not choose to be received in his public character. If he had, except paying him military honors, it was not my intention to depart from that plain and simple manner of living, which accords with the real interest and policy of men struggling under every difficulty for the attainment of the most inestimable blessing of life, *liberty*. The Chevalier was polite enough to approve my principle, and condescended to appear pleased with our Spartan living. In a word, he made us all exceedingly happy by his affability and good humor, while he remained in camp.*

* When M. de la Luzerne landed in Boston, marked honors were shown to him. A salute of thirteen guns was fired. The President of the Council of Massachusetts called on him, and made a formal address. He was invited to meet the Council in the capacity of minister from France. This invitation he declined, on the ground that he had not yet exhibited his credentials to Congress. Count Vergennes wrote to him, in reply to his information on this head, that the King's Council thought his objections unnecessary, and that he might properly have accepted the invitation, for the following reasons; "First, because every public minister may receive the honors of the States belonging to the prince to whom he is accredited, before having delivered his letters of credence; secondly, because Massachusetts is itself a sovereign State, and the exercise and representation of its sovereignty are not deposited in the hands of Congress; and

You are pleased, my dear Marquis, to express an earnest desire of seeing me in France, after the establishment of our independency, and do me the honor to add, that you are not singular in your request. Let me entreat you to be persuaded, that to meet you any where, after the final accomplishment of so glorious an event, would contribute to my happiness; and that to visit a country, to whose generous aid we stand so

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you are likewise implicitly accredited to that State, since you are accredited to Congress, in which it has deputies."

M. de la Luzerne came to America in the same vessel with Mr. John Adams, when the latter returned from his first mission to France. After Mr. Adams was appointed minister plenipotentiary for negotiating peace, M. de la Luzerne wrote to Count Vergennes concerning him as follows.

"Nearly two months on board the French frigate with Mr. Adams have afforded me an opportunity of studying his character; and, as I have reason to think that he had but small occasion to develope it to you, I trust you will not be dissatisfied to receive my opinion of him. He has been educated to the study and practice of jurisprudence, and has early been accustomed to the reading of the Greek and Roman philosophers. He has acquired from their writings a great love of liberty, and a violent hatred of tyranny. He was one of the first to regard the present revolution as possible, and he wrote against the British government, infusing into his works a vehemence and energy, which have rendered him particularly odious to the English; and I think they will have a repugnance to negotiating with him. Moreover he is a virtuous man, and penetrated with a love of his country. His attachment is particularly strong towards Massachusetts, of which he is a native; and if his instructions on the nature of the negotiation should furnish him with the means of procuring conditions particularly advantageous to that State, and to the other eastern States, I have no doubt that he will seize them with avidity. It is even to be feared, that in consequence of his prejudices in regard to the fishery of Newfoundland, and the possession of Canada and Nova Scotia, he may embarrass the negotiation, or, if it go contrary to his wishes, that he may communicate such reports to his constituents, as may lead them into an error respecting the purity of our views, and diminish the attachment of the friends of the alliance. If there are any means of influencing this minister, I think they must be found in his sensibility to the esteem and good opinion, which others have for him." — *October 8th.*

On the same day, M. de la Luzerne wrote to M. de Montmorin, the French ambassador in Spain, respecting Mr. Adams; — "He is a good citizen, and one of the most zealous for the rights of America; his knowledge and abilities correspond to his good dispositions."

much indebted, would be an additional pleasure; but remember, my good friend, that I am unacquainted with your language, that I am too far advanced in years to acquire a knowledge of it, and that, to converse through the medium of an interpreter upon common occasions, especially with the ladies, must appear so extremely awkward, insipid, and uncouth, that I can scarcely bear it in idea. I will, therefore, hold myself disengaged for the present; but when I see you in Virginia, we will talk of this matter and fix our plans.

The declaration of Spain, in favor of France has given universal joy to every Whig; while the poor Tory droops, like a withering flower under a declining sun. We are anxiously expecting to hear of great and important events on your side of the Atlantic. At present, the imagination is left in the wide field of conjecture. Our eyes one moment are turned to an invasion of England, then of Ireland, Minorca, Gibraltar. In a word, we hope every thing, but know not what to expect, or where to fix. The glorious success of Count d'Estaing in the West Indies, at the same time that it adds dominion to France, and fresh lustre to her arms, is a source of new and unexpected misfortune to our *tender and generous parent*, and must serve to convince her of the folly of quitting the substance in pursuit of a shadow; and, as there is no experience equal to that which is bought, I trust she will have a superabundance of this kind of knowledge, and be convinced, as I hope all the world and every tyrant in it will be, that the best and only safe road to honor, glory, and true dignity, is *justice*.

We have such repeated advices of Count d'Estaing's being in these seas, that, though I have no official information of the event, I cannot help giving entire credit to the report, and looking for his arrival every

moment, and I am preparing accordingly. The enemy at New York also expect it; and, to guard against the consequences, as much as it is in their power to do, are repairing and strengthening all the old fortifications, and adding new ones in the vicinity of the city. Their fears, however, do not retard an embarkation, which was making, and generally believed to be for the West Indies or Charleston. It still goes forward; and, by my intelligence, it will consist of a pretty large detachment. About fourteen days ago, one British regiment (the forty-fourth completed) and three Hessian regiments were embarked, and are gone, as is supposed, to Halifax.* The operations of the enemy this campaign have been confined to the establishment of works of defence, taking a post at King's Ferry, and burning the defenceless towns of New Haven, Fairfield, and Norwalk, on the Sound within reach of their shipping, where little else was or could be opposed to them, than the cries of distressed women and helpless children; but these were offered in vain. Since these notable exploits, they have never stepped out of their works or beyond their lines. How a conduct of this kind is to effect the conquest of America, the wisdom of a North, a Germain, or a Sandwich best can decide. It is too deep and refined for the comprehension of common understandings and the general run of politicians.

Mrs. Washington, who set out for Virginia when we took the field in June, has often in her letters to me inquired if I had heard from you, and will be much pleased at hearing that you are well and happy. In her name, as she is not here, I thank you for your polite attention to her, and shall speak her sense of the honor

* These troops were actually designed for Canada, being the reinforcement requested by General Haldimand. They sailed on the 10th of September.

conferred on her by the Marchioness. When I look back to the length of this letter, I have not the courage to give it a careful reading for the purpose of correction. You must, therefore, receive it with all its imperfections, accompanied with this assurance, that, though there may be many inaccuracies in the letter, there is not a single defect in the friendship of, my dear Marquis, yours, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 4 October, 1779.

SIR,

Immediately upon the receipt of your letter, I set about concerting the measures necessary for coöperation with his Excellency the Count d'Estaing, agreeably to the powers vested in me by the resolve of Congress.† I have called upon the State of Massachusetts for two thousand militia, Connecticut for four thousand, New York for two thousand five hundred, New Jersey, for two thousand, and Pennsylvania for one thousand

* See an account of the Marquis de Lafayette's arrival in France, and extracts from his letters, in the APPENDIX, No. VIII.

† The French minister received letters from Charleston, South Carolina, dated September 5th and 8th, conveying intelligence of the arrival of Count d'Estaing in Georgia. These letters were immediately laid before Congress, who resolved that a copy of them should be sent to General Washington, and "that the General should also be informed of the intention of our ally, that the armament under Count d'Estaing shall operate against the enemy in these United States; and that General Washington be authorized and directed to concert and execute such plans of coöperation with the minister of France, as he may think proper." — *Secret Journals, September 28th.* It was at the same time recommended to the several States, that they should furnish General Washington with such succours as he might require, both by detachments of militia, and by providing for the allied armaments ample supplies of provisions.

five hundred. The last is below the quota, that the State ought to furnish, in proportion to its strength; but I was induced to make a requsition of that number only, upon a consideration that we shall be obliged to call largely upon that State for the means of transportation of provisions and supplies of all kinds. I have also taken the liberty to press the States above mentioned to use the most vigorous exertions in procuring supplies of provision, especially of flour, by the want of which I fear we shall be much embarrassed, should we draw such a body of men together, as will be necessary to give our operations a tolerable prospect of success. I have not heard from General Sullivan, except by report, since the 30th of August. I have however despatched an express to him, upon the supposition that he has completed the object of his expedition and is on his return, desiring him to hasten his march, and directing him to leave as few men as he possibly can in the frontier garrisons. I have also written to General Gates, desiring him to hold all the Continental troops under his command ready to march this way, should his Excellency the Count d'Estaing, upon settling a plan of operations, determine upon an attempt against New York. But as there is a possibility that he may, on being made acquainted with the numbers and situation of the enemy, prefer an attack upon Rhode Island, I have desired General Gates to be looking towards and preparing for such an event. I had, upon the first report of the Count's standing towards this coast, stationed Major Lee in Monmouth, with a letter for the Count, to be carried on board upon his first appearance, in which I informed him of the enemy's force by sea and land, and their position at that time, and pointed out to him the measures,

which I thought it would be advantageous for him to pursue upon his arrival.

I am preparing fresh letters for him, in which I shall inform him fully of all posterior events, and the measures I am taking for a coöperation. I am also engaging and sending down proper pilots to him. I have taken the liberty to countermand the march of Colonel Clarke with the two regiments of North Carolina, upon a presumption, that, from the favorable aspect of affairs to the southward, I shall stand justifiable for such a measure. I observe by a resolve of Congress lately transmitted to me, that three of the Continental frigates were ordered to South Carolina. I do not know the views of Congress in making this disposition; but, should they have no particular object in contemplation, I would [illegible]ure to recommend their being ordered to join the [illegible]t's fleet, which in my opinion would be much benefited by an additional number of frigates, especially for the navigation of the North River and the Sound. I think also it would be well for the Marine Committee to be directed to turn their attention to the transportation of flour from the Delaware and Chesapeake by water. Should we obtain the command of the sea, vessels might, without the least danger, be introduced within the Hook, thence to Amboy, from whence their cargoes might easily be conveyed in boats up Newark Bay. Or should some of them run round into the Sound, it would be equally, nay, more convenient. Should we operate to the eastward, measures of this kind will be indispensably necessary, as the length and difficulty of land carriage will render the support of any considerable body of men almost impossible. The wheat of Maryland being in more forwardness for grinding, than any other, I could wish that Governor Johnson may be requested to push the purchases with-

in that State. The commissary-general gives the fullest encouragement on the score of beef, but of flour he continues to express his fears. I am, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

West Point, 4 October, 1779.

SIR,

On receiving advice, that your Excellency had been seen in a latitude, which indicated your approach to our coasts, and supposing it possible you might direct your course this way, I did myself the honor to write you a letter on the 13th of September, and stationed an officer in Monmouth county to meet you with it on your arrival at the Hook. In that letter I explained the situation and force of the enemy, and took the liberty to propose some preliminary movements, on which the successive operations would materially depend. In the uncertainty of your coming, and with little more than conjecture on which to found an expectation of it, these were all the measures I was then authorized to take. But I have just received despatches from Congress, acquainting me with your arrival at Georgia, and your intention, after accomplishing your object, to proceed this way. I have, in consequence, called upon the neighbouring States for a reinforcement of militia, and am taking every other measure in my power to prepare for a coöperation, with all the despatch and vigor our circumstances will permit.

I beg leave to enclose a copy of the abovementioned letter, and the substance of the intelligence since received. Your Excellency will observe, that only two detachments of troops have sailed from New York; one consisting of one British and three German regi-

ments for Halifax or Quebec, and the other composed of grenadiers, light infantry, and one British regiment, supposed to be destined to the southern States. I have not received any account of the debarkation of the Halifax detachment, and I believe it has prosecuted its voyage. One of the transports has been taken and carried into Philadelphia, with one hundred and sixty men on board. She reports Halifax to have been her destination. I have reason to believe, from some information recently obtained, that the latter detachment has returned. This, however, is not altogether authentic; but I am the more inclined to give credit to it, as I think it probable they were bound to South Carolina, and in their way may have heard of your Excellency's arrival in that quarter, which would naturally occasion their return to New York.

The enemy's force in New York and its dependencies, supposing the return of the above detachment, I now estimate at fourteen thousand. Their fleet consists of the Russell seventy-four, the Europa sixty-four, the Renown fifty, the Roebuck forty-four, and a few smaller frigates. Your Excellency will perceive, that their affairs are in a fluctuating state; and therefore many changes may have taken place since my last advices. From the advanced season of the year, every instant of time is infinitely precious, and must be even more so to your Excellency than to us. This makes it to be lamented, that it had not been possible to concert a plan before your arrival. The force under your command, and the time you can devote to this business, are essential points in determining what can with propriety be undertaken; and the first steps will be of great consequence to all the succeeding ones. To enable you the better to regulate your own movements, I shall expose to you our prospects, and the

different plans which present themselves to me, with the obstacles attending each.

New York is the first and capital object, upon which every other is dependent. The loss of the army and fleet there would be one of the severest blows the English nation could experience. Rhode Island would fall of course; but your Excellency will be sensible, that the reduction of fourteen thousand men, concentred upon a small Island with the assistance of fortifications, is an enterprise of no inconsiderable difficulty; and requires a vigorous exertion of our resources, in conjunction with your force, to give it a sufficient probability of success. Not less than thirty thousand men will in my opinion be adequate to the operation, and we cannot collect the numbers necessary on our part, in addition to what we already have in the field, in less than three weeks from this time. The interval between your arrival and that period must for the most part be spent in a state of inactivity on our side, unless you judge it proper to direct your attention to an attempt upon Rhode Island.

The knowledge you have of that place will enable you to decide better than I can on the eligibility of this project. The garrison there is respectable, and, as I am informed, secured by a chain of redoubts and intrenchments from one flank of the Island to the other, which would be exceedingly formidable to an assault. The town however may be burnt, and with it the enemy's magazines, which it is probable would speedily reduce them to a surrender. Your Excellency is a better judge than I am of the time, which would be exhausted in the enterprise; but I should imagine it might require at least four weeks for its accomplishment. If you should think proper to pursue this plan, we have a body of two thousand troops now ready

at Rhode Island, and can march thither any additional number you may deem necessary for a coöperation. But in order to this, I must request you will give me previous notice of your intention.

Success in this attempt would be favorable to our ulterior operations against New York, but a failure would be attended with the reverse, as it would damp the spirits of the country and diminish its exertions. Another inconvenience would attend it, which is, that, without a division of your force to continue the blockade of New York, the fleet now there would make its escape. Indeed, in any plan, a division of your force will be indispensable. Rhode Island and the Sound must be blockaded, otherwise the garrison there will form a junction with the main body at New York, which would be so great an accession of force, as would render the success of our operations improbable; and the frigates and smaller vessels may find a passage through the Sound, and elude your Excellency in that way. But the difference is this. In the latter case, two or three fifty-gun ships, and as many frigates, will answer the purpose. In the former, some of your ships of the line must be left at New York, to have a superiority to the two that are there, aided by the frigates. In case of the attempt upon Rhode Island, the only expedient, to avoid a division of your ships of the line, will be, to remain with the whole at New York, and send your troops round under the protection of your frigates. Your Excellency is the best judge with what propriety a movement of this kind can be hazarded.

In either event, it appears to me advisable, that you should first enter the bay of New York, with a part at least, of your fleet, and, as suddenly as possible, intercept the troops on Staten Island, and the garrisons

up the river, as the capture of these will materially facilitate the reduction of the remaining force; and I take the liberty strongly to recommend, that a proper detachment may without loss of time block up the Sound and the port of Rhode Island. I have taken measures for furnishing you with pilots; one of them accompanies this letter; but I have directed three or four to be stationed with Major Lee at Monmouth, to go off to your Excellency on your first appearance. Among these is one, who is acquainted with the navigation of the North River, in its present state, and will be able to take up the frigates, which I had the honor to request might proceed into Haverstraw Bay. I have written to Congress, to recommend the assembling of all our frigates and armed vessels, to act in conjunction with the fleet under your command.

With candor and freedom have I exposed to your Excellency my sentiments and expectations; and I entreat that you will honor me with a similar communication of your views and intentions. Nothing will give me greater pleasure, than to concur with these to the utmost of our ability. I have not concealed the difficulties in the way of a coöperation, because I thought it my duty fully to apprize you of them. I am persuaded, that you will ascribe what I have said to the proper motive, and to that caution, which ought always to influence enterprises pregnant with such interesting consequences. You will not impute it to an unwillingness to exert the resources of the country, or to a distrust of the event; for, I assure your Excellency, I feel the importance of this generous and seasonable succour, and have the highest hopes of its utility to the common cause, and a termination glorious to the allied arms. I rejoice in the opportunity it affords; nor is the prospect of acting in immediate

conjunction with your Excellency one of the least flattering circumstances. I shall with the greatest alacrity concur in the execution of any plan, which shall be thought promotive of the interest and glory of the two nations, and may add to the laurels you have already reaped in so distinguished a manner. I hope soon to have the pleasure of assuring you personally of those sentiments of respectful attachment, with which I have the honor to be, your Excellency's, &c.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 7 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I shall comply with your present engagements to the spies, which you have promised to pay in specie; but, as we have so little of this to spare for even the most pressing and important purposes within the enemy's lines, you will be careful to effect as much as possible by such other means as we have in our power; and be economical in all other expenditures, as our circumstances are limited. It is an object at present particularly interesting to be informed as to the enemy's naval force. You will therefore be attentive to this, and to such other intelligence as may be of use.

I have given a warrant to Captain Rudulph for the sum granted by Congress to the non-commissioned officers and privates concerned in the attack of Paulus Hook.* You will be pleased to distribute this

* Congress had passed resolves highly complimentary to Major Lee, thanking him for "the remarkable prudence, address, and bravery displayed by him in the attack on the enemy's fort and works at Paulus Hook." Much praise was likewise bestowed on the officers and soldiers of his party. A medal of gold, emblematical of the affair, was ordered to be struck and presented to Major Lee. The brevet rank and pay

money in proportion to the pay of the non-commissioned officers and privates, which was the manner observed in the case of Stony Point. You may in future, or while on your present command, mark your letters *private*. I am, &c.

TO JOHN JAY.

West Point, 7 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Permit me, amongst the number of your friends, to congratulate you and my country on your late honorable and important appointment. Be assured, Sir, that my pleasure on this occasion, though it may be equalled, cannot be exceeded by that of any other. I do most sincerely wish you a pleasant and agreeable passage, the most perfect and honorable accomplishment of your ministry, and a safe return to the bosom of a grateful country. With the greatest regard and sincerest personal attachment, I am, &c.*

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of a captain were given to Lieutenants McAllister and Rudulph, respectively; and fifteen thousand dollars in money were voted to be distributed among the non-commissioned officers and privates, in such a manner as the Commander-in-chief should direct. — *Journals, September 24th.*

* Mr. Jay was appointed, on the 27th of September, minister plenipotentiary to negotiate a treaty of alliance and of amity and commerce between the United States and Spain. In reply to the above letter he wrote; "Your very friendly letter of the 7th instant gave me all the pleasure, which accompanies marks of cordial esteem and attachment from those, whose commendation is praise, and whose friendship is discriminating. Among the objects of my mission are some, which, however just, will not be easily attained; and therefore its success will be precarious, and probably partial. The only satisfaction I promise myself from the appointment will flow from the rectitude, with which the duties of it will be discharged, and not from a prospect of general approbation. God grant that the time may not be far distant, when peace and liberty

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 7 October, 1779.

SIR,

Since my letter to your Excellency, on the 4th instant, I have had the honor of a visit from his Excellency Monsieur Gerard. In the conversation we had relative to a coöperation with the fleet and troops under your command, he expressed his doubts of its being possible for you to continue such a length of time as may be essential to the success of the undertaking, and which alone could justify me in going into those extensive preparations absolutely necessary on our part. I have therefore appointed Brigadier-General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton to wait upon your Excellency as speedily as possible, and explain to you fully my ideas of the proposed coöperation; the means we shall be able to employ; the obstacles we shall have to encounter on our side; the plans which it may be proper to pursue; and the measures which are taking and may be taken by the enemy to counteract them. This will enable you to determine what you can with propriety undertake. I shall only add, that if you will engage to coöperate with your whole naval and

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shall lead you from the field to enjoy in silence and retirement the luxury of reflecting, that you have saved your country. Adieu." — *October 14th.*

Mr. Jay had given great satisfaction to all parties in discharging the duties of his office. When he was elected, it seems he did not intend retaining the post for a long time. On that occasion Mr. Duane, a member of Congress from New York, wrote to Governor Clinton as follows. "Mr. Laurens, who has been in the chair thirteen months, resigned yesterday. A great majority of Congress immediately determined, that one of the New York delegates should succeed to the chair. We held up General Schuyler, which seemed to be very agreeable. On account of his absence, Mr. Jay was prevailed on to take the chair, with a resolution on his part to resign in favor of General Schuyler, as soon as he attends." — *December 10th*, 1778. General Schuyler did not take his seat in Congress till several weeks after Mr. Jay was appointed minister to Spain.

land force against the enemy's fleet and army at New York, till the winter is so far advanced, that the ice will make it impracticable to remain with your fleet any longer in the port, I will bring twenty-five thousand effective men into the field, and will exert all the resources of the country in a vigorous and decided cooperation. Without this assurance on the part of your Excellency, it would be inconsistent with my duty to the public, and the common cause, to incur the expense and hazard which would be inseparable from the enterprise, and the more disagreeable consequences, which would attend a failure.

I flatter myself your Excellency will be fully sensible of the weight of the reasons on which this declaration is founded, and will approve the frankness with which it is made, and with which I have instructed General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton to disclose to you every circumstance and every consideration, with which it is necessary you should be acquainted. If your determination should be in favor of the enterprise, I request you will honor me with a line in answer to this letter, expressive of your ultimate intentions, and that you will communicate to the gentlemen, who now wait upon you, the previous measures you propose to pursue, and your sentiments of the most eligible plan of coöperation. I shall act in consequence, till the period arrives for concerting a final and more determinate plan.

I would now observe, that you may repose the most implicit confidence in General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton, and accordingly I recommend them to your kind civilities and attention. And having done this, I have only to renew the assurance of that attachment and perfect respect, with which I am, &c.

TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 9 October, 1779.

SIR,

While I express my sense of the approbation with which Congress have honored me, and my pleasure from the manner in which it has been communicated, permit me to congratulate you on the presidency with which you are vested. The army must feel the motives to a discharge of their duty increased by the flattering marks of honor and attention, with which their endeavours have been received. Since the last intelligence which I communicated to Congress, I have been advised from New York of the sudden return of the division of troops under Lord Cornwallis. A number of transports, on his Lordship's return to the Hook, were immediately ordered for Rhode Island; part of which sailed on the 27th, and the rest on the 29th ultimo; as my correspondent supposes, to withdraw the garrison. The advice says further, that the troops under Lord Cornwallis were still on shipboard; and that the reinforcement in the fleet under the convoy of Sir Andrew Hammond, which arrived the 22d of last month, does not exceed six hundred men, and these chiefly Hessian recruits; other accounts speak of the number as much higher.

In order to give the Count d'Estaing a more comprehensive detail of my intentions, in case a coöperation can be undertaken against New York, and to obtain the necessary information of his views, I have despatched General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton to meet him off Lewistown * for this purpose. I have to regret, that circumstances would not admit of some definite

* In the State of Delaware, near Cape Henlopen.

or preconcerted plan, that might have enabled us to proceed with certainty in our measures. In the mean time, however, I am taking every necessary step for a coöperation, as far as our conjectures of his designs and our situation will authorize. The enclosed letter from General Sullivan, and the other papers herewith transmitted, came to hand on the 6th instant. I have taken the first moment of leisure, since their receipt, to send them forward. I congratulate Congress on his having completed so effectually the destruction of the whole of the towns and settlements of the hostile Indians in so short a time, and with so inconsiderable a loss in men. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PHILLIPS.

Head-Quarters, 20 October, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your three letters. With respect to those, which regard your and Major-General Riedesel's detention, and that of the officers with you, I must take the liberty to refer you to my letter of the 10th, as an answer. And as to the several matters of request contained in them, they are such, as I neither think myself at liberty to act upon, nor in which I would wish to interfere. The power of granting or refusing them is in Congress, who, upon your application, I persuade myself would give the requests due consideration. I am sorry to be under the necessity of observing to General Phillips,* that no expressions of personal politeness to

* It has been seen, by a letter from General Washington to Colonel Bland, dated August 11th, that General Phillips and General Riedesel were permitted to go to New York on parole. They left Charlottesville with their families for that purpose, and proceeded to Elizabethtown, op-

myself, however flattering, in the correspondence he may think fit to honor me with, can be acceptable, while they are accompanied with insinuations against my superiors. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

West Point, 20 October, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

On the 30th of last month, I wrote you a letter, which was to have been borne to you by Colonel Fleu-

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posite to Staten Island, expecting immediately to pass over to New York. But just as they had reached that place, orders came from General Washington for the whole party to return to Bethlehem. It seems, that, through some misunderstanding between General Phillips and the agent sent by Congress to settle the accounts of the convention troops at Charlottesville, this business had not been executed in a manner satisfactory to Congress. As soon as the facts were made known, and before the officers had reached the end of their journey, a resolve was passed, that in the present state of affairs they should not be permitted to go into New York, and the Board of War was directed to detain them. This disappointment was extremely vexatious to General Phillips, and not without some reason, as it appeared afterwards that the delay and irregularity in settling the accounts were chargeable quite as much to the agent of Congress as to himself. In the first excitement of his feelings he wrote in a tone of bitter complaint, to which General Washington replied, on the 10th of October; "I have not been honored with any particular communication of the reasons, which induced Congress to pass the act for suspending your and General Riedesel's going into New York at this time; but I make no doubt they were such as Congress deemed sufficient, and that they will appear so, whenever they are pleased to make them known." This did not satisfy General Phillips, and he continued to write to General Washington, making various requests, seemingly determined not to apply on any occasion directly to Congress, nor to hold any correspondence with that body. In two of his letters he spoke in a manner somewhat disrespectfully of Congress, which caused the gentle rebuke in the closing part of the above reply. The obstacles were at length removed, and Generals Phillips and Riedesel went into New York before the end of November. For an interesting description of several incidents relating to this subject, see Wallenstein's *Translation of Madame de Riedesel's Memoirs*, pp. 221 — 231.

ry, to whom the relation of some particulars was referred; but the advice of the Count d'Estaing's arrival at Georgia, and the hope given us by Congress of seeing him at New York, has induced this officer to suspend his voyage, and go in pursuit of fresh laurels. Of course my letter to you remained on hand, and gave me an opportunity at leisure hours to take a copy of it, which is now sent by Monsieur de la Colombe. The original I put into the hands of Monsieur Gerard a few days ago, who gave me the honor of a visit before his departure for his native country.

We have been in hourly expectation, for the last fifteen days, of seeing the Count d'Estaing off Sandy Hook. We have not heard a syllable from Charleston since the 8th of September. The accounts then mentioned, that the Count intended to make his attack the next day. Under such circumstances, you may easily form an idea of our impatience and anxiety. We are making every preparation in our power for an extensive and perfect coöperation with the fleet, if it comes; while the enemy, whose expectation of it keeps pace with ours, are equally vigorous in preparing for defence. They are throwing up strong works at the Narrows, both on Long Island and Staten Island. They are fortifying the point at Sandy Hook, on which the light-house stands, and every other spot, which can contribute to the defence of the harbour or the city. Besides which, they have already sunk eight and have twelve more large ships to sink in the channel within the light-house; and transports are going to Rhode Island, with the view, it is said, of taking off the garrison. In a word, if they are not horribly frightened, they certainly are in horrid confusion. They work incessantly, and will, it is to be feared, render the entrance into the harbour extremely difficult, if not im-

practicable, if the operations to the southward should delay the Count much longer.

General Sullivan has completed the entire destruction of the country of the Six Nations; driven all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, out of it; and is at Easton on his return to join this army, with the troops under his command. He has performed this service without losing forty men, either by the enemy or by sickness. While the Six Nations were under this rod of correction, the Mingo and Muncey tribes, living on the Allegany, French Creek, and other waters of the Ohio above Fort Pitt, met with similar chastisement from Colonel Brodhead, who with six hundred men advanced upon them at the same instant, and laid waste their country. These unexpected and severe strokes have disconcerted, humbled, and distressed the Indians exceedingly; and will, I am persuaded, be productive of great good; as they are undeniable proofs to them, that Great Britain cannot protect them, and that it is in our power to chastise them, whenever their hostile conduct deserves it.

The embarkation, mentioned in my letter of the 30th of September, did actually take place, and consisted of nearly six thousand men, the flower of the British army, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who with these troops sailed the 25th of that month; and two days afterwards returned, having received some intelligence of the Count d'Estaing being on the coast of Georgia, whither, it is said, this armament was destined. They are relanded and are now at New York. The first detachment from that place, supposed to have sailed for Halifax, but in reality designed for Canada, (consisting, as I mentioned to you in my last, of the forty-fourth completed British, and three Hessian regiments,) met with a storm at sea, which dispersed the

transports, two of which, containing near four hundred Hessians, fell into our hands, and are now in Philadelphia; two others returned to New York dismasted. Of the others, no account is yet obtained.

You will no doubt, before this letter reaches you, have heard, that Mr. Jay, late president of Congress, goes minister plenipotentiary to the court of Madrid, and Mr. Carmichael as his secretary; that Mr. John Adams returns to your court for special purposes, and Mr. Dana goes as his secretary; and that Mr. John Laurens (my aid), who flew to South Carolina, when his country was in danger, is appointed secretary to Dr. Franklin; but whether he will accept or not, I cannot say, as I have not seen him since the month of March last.*

* Colonel Laurens declined the appointment. He was absent in South Carolina when the election took place; but, as soon as he returned to General Washington's head-quarters, he wrote as follows to the President of Congress.

"I have received your Excellency's letter, acquainting me, that Congress have been pleased to appoint me secretary to their minister plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles. Sensible of the honor, which they have done me, and penetrated by their goodness, I entreat them to accept my most grateful acknowledgments. At the same time, conscious of my inexperience in politics, and diffident of answering their expectations in a commission of such importance, I must request their leave to persevere in a line of duty, to which my inclination as well as duty attaches me, until an honorable termination of the war. These motives for declining an appointment, in every private view so flattering to myself, will I hope be a sufficient excuse." — *December 6th.*

The following particulars, respecting the election of Mr. Adams and Mr. Jay, are taken from a manuscript letter written by M. Gerard to Count Vergennes.

"*September 25th.* — Congress proceeded to the choice of a minister to Spain. The friends of Arthur Lee made strong efforts to have his commission renewed. The motion was put in a direct form, and lost by so large a majority, as to destroy all hope of his succeeding. A motion was then put, that they should proceed to a choice of a person or persons, who should be charged with the powers of making peace. This was carried. A member then proposed, that Franklin and John Adams should be appointed jointly. Many members were opposed to a junction of any sort.

It only remains for me now to beg the favor of you to present my respectful compliments to *your* (but have I not a right, as you say she has made a tender of her love to *me*, to call her *my*?) amiable and lovely Marchioness, and to assure you, that, with every sentiment of the most perfect regard and personal attachment, I have the honor to be, &c.

The party from the east then proposed Mr. Adams, and the party from the south Mr. Jay. The decision of the question was deferred till the next day. The event of the election would seem to be problematical. Four States have declared for Adams and the same number for Jay. The accidental presence or absence of any of the deputies of the other States would decide the question. Your letter to Mr. Adams has produced an impression highly favorable to him.

"*September 26th.* — The election of ministers plenipotentiary occurred to-day. The first ballot gave five States for Adams and four for Jay. The act of confederation requires seven votes for a valid election. The second ballot gave six votes for Jay and five for Adams. The friends of the former, perceiving that Arthur Lee was perpetually the cause of division on this subject, as on all others, put the motion, 'Shall a minister plenipotentiary to Spain be nominated?' The affirmative was sustained by seven States against two. Only seven individuals of thirty-eight were for the negative. By this vote the commission of Arthur Lee was virtually revoked. One of his partisans then named him as minister plenipotentiary. There are now three candidates, and the election is deferred till to-morrow. It is hoped by some, that Mr. Adams will be named for Spain, and Mr. Jay for the peace. This arrangement promises to conciliate the parties, and M. de la Luzerne thinks with me, that we shall have reason to be satisfied.

"*September 27th.* — At length the plenipotentiaries are chosen. Mr. Jay is destined for Spain, and the full powers for peace are confided to Mr. Adams. One vote only was found in favor of Arthur Lee. The choice of Mr. Jay leaves nothing to desire. To much intelligence and the best intentions, he joins a conciliating spirit. As to Mr. Adams, I am not acquainted with him, nor is he known to but a few of the present members of Congress. He has the reputation of an honest man; and the presumption, that he would be agreeable to you, has influenced their opinions."

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 21 October, 1779.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excelllency's favor of the 14th, enclosing an act of Congress of the same date, expressive of their sense of the plan and execution of the expedition under the command of Major-General Sullivan. I feel it a principal satisfaction, that the discharge of my duty and the conduct of the troops should meet with the approbation of Congress. Herewith your Excellency will receive an extract of a letter from Colonel Brodhead, relative to his expedition against the Muncey Indians, and that part of the Senecas on the Allegany River. I congratulate you on his success.

By very recent accounts from the posts at King's Ferry, it would appear that every thing is in the utmost readiness for an immediate evacuation of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point. It is however by no means evident, whether the evacuation is to be immediate, though this would rather seem the intention, or only to be executed in case of the Count's appearing against New York. The enemy at New York continue their preparations to provide against a combined attack, and for a concentration of their whole force. They are taking measures also to render the passage to them by water as difficult as possible. A letter from Elizabethtown reports, that eight large ships, one of which is the Strombolo, an Indiaman, are sunk on the point of the east bank, an exact south-west course. Ten others are lying ready to sink, from the point of the west bank in a line to where the others terminate, leaving a space only for one ship to pass at a time.

In a letter of the 15th instant from General Gates,

he writes to me, "My intelligence from all quarters and reports from all stations, announce that, the enemy are preparing to evacuate Newport. Monday or Tuesday it is imagined they will take their departure. A deserter from the twenty-second regiment, mortally wounded, but rescued by a party of our soldiers, declares, that the whole of the troops now on Rhode Island are bound to the West Indies; this may be, but I believe they will first visit New York." This is the substance of my intelligence since my last communication with Congress. I have the honor, &c.*

TO PRESIDENT REED.

West Point, 22 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Three days ago I received your obliging favor of the 14th, and was sorry to find you had been so much

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* The evacuation of Newport took place on the 25th of October. Sir Henry Clinton wrote to Lord George Germain, that the troops from Rhode Island arrived on the 27th, the evacuation having been executed without sacrifice, or molestation from the enemy. Soon after the order was despatched, the admiral received intelligence through some papers taken by a privateer, which induced him to believe, that the French were in possession of Halifax. His views were then altered respecting the withdrawing of the troops from Rhode Island; and, as this was originally a plan of his own, an order was issued at his suggestion to stop the evacuation, unless it was so far advanced as to render the post exposed to essential danger in case of an attack. To accomplish this object, two successive orders were sent off; the first by an armed vessel, which was taken by the enemy; the other by the Delaware frigate, which did not arrive till General Prescott had embarked with the whole garrison. "The evacuation was founded in a great measure on the prospect of Count d'Estaing's attacking that or this port, and on the necessity of securing one of them. The order for re-occupying it was chiefly in deference to the admiral's opinion that Halifax was threatened, and that the danger of that place gave importance to Rhode Island." — *MS. Letter, New York, October 28th.*

indisposed. Before this, I hope you have perfectly recovered. Your early attention, and that of the Assembly, to my requisitions, have my warmest thanks; and the more so, from the situation in which they found you. I could wish, however, that the three months' service of the militia had been made to commence only from the time of their joining the army. I need not enter into a detail of reasons for this with you, as your own judgment and experience will, I am persuaded, have already anticipated them. Your intention of leading your militia, in case they are brought to the field, is a circumstance honorable to yourself, and flattering to me. The example alone would have its weight; but, seconded by your knowledge of discipline, your abilities, activity, and bravery, it could not fail of happy effects. Men are influenced greatly by the conduct of their superiors, and particularly so, where they have both their confidence and affection.

With respect to the point to which you call my recollection, I confess, when you intimated your desire of Continental rank to me, as it passed cursorily through my mind, it struck me as a matter of indifference; or at least as one against which no important objections then occurred, inasmuch as it was to have no operation in the line. However, I must now candidly acknowledge, and I shall do it without hesitation, from motives of general duty, from a confidence in your friendship, as well as in your zeal for the public service, and from the express authority of your letter, that, having maturely weighed the subject, and examined the consequences to which it might lead, I think it cannot be obtained, either with a view to the purposes you mentioned when you first broached the point to me, or with respect to the present occasion for which the militia are called out.

The discontents, the jealousies, the uneasinesses, that

have prevailed in the army, and the complaints which have been added on account of rank being conferred out of the common course, are all opposed to the measure. These uneasinesses, my dear Sir, though not quite so prevalent among the different ranks of officers as they were, are far, very far, from being done away; and would, I fear, proceed to more than their former height, upon any supposed injury, whether real or imaginary, to what they esteem their rights. Among the general officers, and those next in rank, there would be much reason to apprehend this; as they, particularly the former, have loudly complained on the subject of rank being given, even where motives of national policy, and indeed necessity, were urged to justify it; and they reluctantly yielded to it, merely from that consideration. From hence, and as in your case this consideration could not be urged, I should fear, that it would be attended with greater disgust; not from any personal, individual objection, but from an idea, that the appointment itself materially affected their rights, and those of the officers in general. Hence it is, that I have uniformly withheld my aid from all applications for brevet commissions to foreigners and others, who had quitted or were about to quit the service, professedly never to interfere with the line of our army.

The situation of our officers is delicate, and perhaps requires a greater degree of attention than that of any others. Deriving no emoluments from the service, but rather losing at the best, patriotism and a love of honor are the motives for their continuing in it. These must be the considerations, which influence the conduct of by far the greater part; and though by these motives the officers are placed in a much more respectable point of view, than if they were governed by interest, yet the ties are not so strong as to induce their submission, or

at least without great difficulty, to any measures they esteem injurious. For these several reasons, I cannot in policy advise to any measures, that might have a tendency to obtain the rank for you. Nor do I think, after mature reflection, that its being given by brevet, which is contrary to the present views of Congress and to their own resolves (founded on the discontents which a contrary practice had created), or circumscribed in its extent by any qualifications which could be thought of, would alter the matter, or produce the least change in the sentiments of the officers. In any case, the ideas of rank and precedence would occur, and, I have too much reason to believe, would give great uneasiness. The temper of the general officers is at this moment a good deal soured. Their distresses, proceeding from the amazing depreciation of money on the one hand, and the discrimination of Congress, in the allowance of subsistence, on the other, need no fresh leaven to set their discontents at work. Rank, then, being the greatest if not the only benefit they are likely to derive for their perseverance in the service, and for their injured fortunes, they become more and more tenacious of its value, and attend the distribution of it with a watchful eye.

I have been rather prolix on this subject, but I thought it incumbent on me to assign the reasons which govern my opinion; because I wish you to be convinced, that I do not want inclination to comply with your wishes, in any instance when it is within the reach of my power consistently to aid them. With very great regard and esteem, I am, dear Sir.*

* In reply to this letter President Reed said; — "I am very happy that I consulted you previous to any application to Congress, who I think under all the circumstances would not have refused it; but, as I should be sorry to add to the public embarrassments, or receive any gratification, which might

TO EDMUND PENDLETON.

West Point, 1 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Recollecting that I am your debtor for an obliging letter, I will make my acknowledgments for it, as a proof that I am not unmindful of the favor, though I have been dilatory in thanking you. A new scene,

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injure the service, I shall decline any further thoughts of the matter. But while I subscribe to the policy of the thing, I can by no means assent to the justice of it. The objection seems to be, that, as no profit attends the service, honor should be the reward of those who have served their country with usefulness and fidelity. But have no persons served their country with usefulness and fidelity but those officers who are now in the line? Or what is to be their reward? They have given up the emoluments, which I am persuaded will not be inconsiderable at the close of the war; and if they are to be excluded from public notice, they will complain with justice and reason. In this class I would comprehend especially those, who have served and yet serve you with honor to themselves, satisfaction to you, and advantage to the public. I should feel exceedingly for those gentlemen, if they were to receive no distinguishing marks of public notice, without offending the line. Many of them served at times and in capacities, which would have rendered them objects sufficient for the enemy's notice, while many of those, who would perhaps be most clamorous, were too obscure for such a distinction. I know some of these gentlemen have their feelings and apprehensions on this project, though they do not express them when they could be best relieved.

"I consider myself as quite disinterested on this subject, as the favor of my State, and my own perseverance, have made me sufficient amends for the injustice of Congress, who have not even indemnified me for actual losses. But it appears to me, that the objections will apply to every gentleman whose claims, however meritorious, interfere with the views and prejudices of the line. Should Providence in its goodness spare your life to the close of the contest, there can be no doubt but some due notice will be taken of them; but I really think men in public stations oftener err in yielding to unjust clamor, than in rewarding beyond true merit. I said before, that I considered myself disinterested, and I really am so, and, as circumstances have turned out, I feel myself much happier in every respect, than if my desires had been gratified; for while the Congress is composed of so many members, who, by engaging in our party disputes last winter endeavoured to distress and disgrace me, I should not be fond of owing any obligation to them. I must therefore beg you would not consider any of the above observations applicable to myself." — *November* 15.

though rather long delayed, is opening to our view, and of sufficient importance to interest the hopes and fears of every well-wisher to his country, and to engage the attention of all America. This I say, on a supposition that the delays to the southward and the advanced season do not prevent a full and perfect coöperation with the French fleet in this quarter. Be this as it may, every thing in the preparatory way, that depends upon me, is done and doing. To Count d'Estaing, then, and that good Providence, which has so remarkably aided us in all our difficulties, the rest is committed.

Stony point, which has been a bone of contention the whole campaign, and the principal business of it on the part of the enemy, is totally evacuated by them.* Rhode Island is also abandoned, and the enemy's whole force is drawn to a point at New York, where neither pains nor labor have been spared to secure the city and harbour; but, in their attempts to effect the latter, some unexpected disappointments have occurred in sinking their hulks. This makes them more intent on their land batteries, which are so disposed as to cover the town and the shipping equally.

All smaller matters on both sides are suspended, while we are looking to the more important object. The consequences of all these movements are not easy to be foretold. But another campaign having been wasted, and the enemy having had their arms disgraced, and all their projects blasted, it may be conceived they will, like an enraged monster summoning his whole strength, make some violent effort, if they should be

* Stony Point and Verplanck's Point had been at first taken by the British, with a view to offensive operations against Washington's army. When such a movement was found impracticable, and a southern expedition was resolved upon, it was determined to evacuate those posts. See above, p. 327.

relieved from their present apprehensions of the French fleet. If they do not detach largely for the West Indies, and I do not see how this is practicable, while they remain inferior at sea, they must, from the disagreeableness of their situation, feel themselves under a kind of necessity to attempt some bold, enterprising stroke, which may in some degree give eclat to their arms, spirits to the Tories, and hope to the ministry.

But I am under no apprehension of a capital injury from any other source, than the depreciation of our Continental money. This indeed is truly alarming, and of so serious a nature, that every other effort is in vain, unless something can be done to restore its credit. Congress, the States individually, and individuals of each State, should exert themselves to effect this great end. It is the only hope, the last resource of the enemy; and nothing but our want of public virtue can induce a continuance of the war. Let them once see, that, as it is in our power, so it is our inclination and intention, to overcome this difficulty, and the idea of conquest, or hope of bringing us back to a state of dependence, will vanish like the morning dew. They can no more encounter this kind of opposition, than the hoar-frost can withstand the rays of the all-cheering sun. The liberty and safety of this country depend upon it. The way is plain, the means are in our power. But it is virtue alone that can effect it. For, without this, heavy taxes frequently collected (the only radical cure), and loans, are not to be obtained. Where this has been the policy, in Connecticut for instance, the prices of every article have fallen, and the money consequently is in demand; but in the other States you can scarcely get a single thing for it; and yet it is withheld from the public by speculators, while every thing that can be useful to the public is engrossed by this tribe of black

gentry, who work more effectually against us than the enemy's arms; and they are a hundred times more dangerous to our liberties and the great cause we are engaged in. With much truth and regard, I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

West Point, 2 November, 1779.

SIR,

After my letter of yesterday was despatched, I received your favor of the 27th ultimo, from Major Armstrong, by express from Peekskill. The Major said he had been detained by a want of horses and bad roads; and, being charged with despatches more immediately for Congress, he was prevented from calling on me as he wished. I regret the disappointment, as it possibly may have deprived me of information of some particulars not mentioned in your letter.

Although your letter is silent upon the subject, I cannot doubt but you are on your march before this time for Hartford, with the Continental troops at least. Indeed, I hoped the instant the enemy should embark, that you would push the troops on, and I did not expect that they would go to the Island at all. Possibly you might have thought their going there for a day or two, necessary for collecting and removing the stores. If however by any means you shall have deferred your march, I am to request that you will begin it, according to the plan settled between us in the course of our correspondence, without a moment's delay.

I gave you before, in consequence of what you said about garrisoning the Island with militia, my private opinion of the most I thought the State should do on the occasion. I am still of the same opinion, for the

reasons I then suggested, as I view the post in the light of a trap. I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO HENRY LAURENS.

West Point, 5 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am much indebted to you for your obliging favors, and offer my thanks for the several agreeable pieces of intelligence, no part of which, believe me, Sir, gave me more sincere pleasure, than the account of your appointment to the States of Holland. No person, if you will permit me to say so much, is more impressed with the importance of those duties, which I conceive to be the objects of your mission, than you are; nor is there any one, whose punctuality and close attention to business afford a happier presage of success to any negotiation within the reach of our powers and reasonable expectations.

Your observations upon the resolve of Congress "to stop the press" are striking, and awaken those ideas,

* When the British evacuated Newport, it was thought advisable by some persons in Rhode Island to throw a garrison of militia into that place. General Gates had written on this subject, and Washington advised against the measure, giving as a reason, that the risk would be greater than any advantage that could result from it. He considered the object of the enemy to be a concentration of their force at New York, with the design of being prepared against a combined attack of Count d'Estaing's fleet and the American forces; but, should any thing prevent Count d'Estaing from coming to the coast, and no danger should be feared from an attack, he believed they would again turn their eyes to Newport, as a convenient harbour and position for troops. In that case they would easily defeat any number of militia that might be sent there. He advised that all the works, except a few on the water-side, should be demolished, and a small body of men only be left to guard the works that remained. Should the enemy return, the principal works would thus be lost to them, and the men, from the smallness of their number, might easily effect a retreat.

which I entertained on this subject at the time of passing it. I reconciled myself, however, to the measure at that time, from a persuasion that such previous assurances had been obtained, founded on clear and demonstrable evidence, of the certainty of getting the necessary supplies by taxation and loans, as would leave nothing to chance. To find the promoters of the measure impressed with doubts is not a little alarming, when we consider the consequences of a failure. A virtuous exertion in the States respectively, and in the individuals of each State, may effect a great deal. But, alas! virtue and patriotism are almost extinct! Stockjobbing, speculating, engrossing, seem to be the great business of the day and of the multitude, whilst a virtuous few struggle, lament, and suffer in silence, though I hope not in vain.

Your statement of matters, respecting the clothing department, is not less distressing. What a pity it is, that the work of to-day should be postponed a week, a month, a year, when no possible good, but much evil, is the inevitable consequence! Our solicitude on account of the operations at Savannah may easily be conceived, when I add, that we have not heard a tittle from thence since the receipt of your obliging letter; and our anxiety for European news is little inferior. We turn an impatient eye to the seaboard, looking for the arrival of the French fleet; and begin to apprehend much from the lateness of the season. It would be a most desirable thing to be ascertained of the extent of Count d'Estaing's intentions in this quarter, that not more than correspondent preparations may be made. At present our situation is awkward and expensive.

Nothing new has happened in these parts, since the evacuation of Rhode Island. Report, indeed, informs us, that the troops of that garrison did not disembark at

New York; but, after receiving an augmentation of Hessians, proceeded to the Hook, and from thence to sea. Of the truth of this, and of the transports wooding and watering, I shall soon have authentic accounts.

I persuade myself, that it is unnecessary for me to have recourse to assurances in proof of the sincere pleasure, with which I should receive my worthy aid, Colonel Laurens. It is an event, however, I have little expected, since I have heard of his late appointment; nor shall I suffer a selfish wish to come into the scale of determination. His abilities, in whatever station they may be employed, will render essential services to his country. My attachment to him, therefore, or any desire of benefiting by his aid, shall not weigh in the balance. For his past services and attention to me, he will ever have my warmest thanks; for his honor, happiness, and advancement in life, my unfeigned best wishes. These, in every step you take, in every station in life to which you may be called, will also attend you, as I can with truth assure you, that, with the greatest esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL DUPORTAIL AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HAMILTON.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 11 November, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Being absent from head-quarters on a visit to several out-posts of the army, when your favor of the 2d instant arrived, and not returning till last night, it was not in my power to answer it before. I am precisely in the predicament you are, with respect to the Count, his intentions, and ultimate operations. I have not heard a

single syllable about either since your departure, except what was transmitted in my letter of the 30th ultimo. From this circumstance, and the lateness of the season, I do not expect that he will arrive in this quarter, or, if he should, that the enterprise which he proposed could now be prosecuted. It is too late to begin it. However, as I received my advices from Congress, of the Count's intention to coöperate, and considered myself bound by their direction to prepare for it, I have not thought myself at liberty to desist from my preparations, nor to fix upon a day when they should cease. I have written to them to-day upon the subject, stating the uncertainty I am under with respect to his Excellency's coming, the great expense which must necessarily attend the continuing of our measures for a coöperation, and the difficulties, supposing it undertaken, from the advanced season; and requested their earliest decision, as to the part I am to pursue. I have also requested the favor of General Schuyler, who is at Congress, to transmit to you the result of their deliberations upon the occasion, as soon as they are ended; by which you will be pleased to govern yourselves, either as to your returning or remaining, as their decision may point out. In the mean time you will withhold all my despatches to the Count, even if he should arrive, till you receive their answer, and endeavour to recover such as may have been lodged by you or others along the coast towards the Capes of Delaware. I have written to Major Lee, with respect to the letters in his hands.

When you have received the determination of Congress, if it is against a coöperation, it will be necessary for you to recall the pilots, except such a number as may be thought material for general purposes in case of the Count's arrival, for the security of his fleet. Such as were employed here, or immediately in consequence

of any of my letters, you will desire to send in their accounts. I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 16 November, 1779.

SIR,

I wrote to you on the 13th, desiring you to continue your march to Peekskill or King's Ferry. We have since that time received advices of a disagreeable nature from the southward. The following is the best account, which I have been able to obtain from Major Clarkson, and which I give you for your private satisfaction only, as perhaps the official account may be somewhat different. Much more time having been spent in the siege of Savannah (where it seems the enemy had secured themselves by strong fortifications), than was at first expected, and there being no certainty of reducing them in a short time by regular approaches, it was agreed to attempt the place by storm on the 9th ultimo; the attack was accordingly made by the allied troops, who were repulsed; in consequence the siege was raised, the cannon and stores having all been previously brought off.

The Count has been obliged, I imagine, from his engagements in another quarter (for I have not the particulars), to leave the coast of Georgia. It remains now to put the army in such a chain of winter cantonments, as will give security to these posts, and with the remainder to take a position, which will afford forage and subsistence, and which will at the same time preserve

* General Duportail and Colonel Hamilton had left Lewistown, where they had first taken their station to watch for Count d'Estaing, and were at Great Egg Harbour when this letter was written.

us from the insults of the collected force of the enemy. These several matters are now in contemplation, and until they are determined, you will be pleased to halt the troops at Danbury. Should they have passed that place before this reaches you, let them be halted on the most convenient ground, till you hear farther from me.

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

West Point, 18 November, 1779.

SIR,

As the present campaign is advancing towards a conclusion, and the counsels of the British cabinet, so far as they have come to my knowledge, are far from recognising our independence and pointing to an honorable peace, I have thought it might not be amiss for me to lay before Congress a state of the army (notwithstanding it is frequently transmitted to the Treasury Board, I believe by a return of the muster-rolls, and to the War Office monthly in a more general view), as it is with Congress to decide on the expediency of making it more respectable, or of fixing its amount at any particular point. The return I have the honor to enclose, is an abstract taken from the muster-rolls of the troops of each State in October (South Carolina and Georgia excepted), and contains a complete view, not only of the whole strength of the forces of each, and of the independent corps at that time, but of the different periods for which they stood engaged. I conceived a return of this sort might be material, and accordingly directed it to be made, the better to enable Congress to govern their views and requisitions as to the several States. They will perceive by this, that our whole

force, including all sorts of troops, non-commissioned officers and privates, drummers and fifers, supposing every man to have existed and to have been in service at that time, a point however totally inadmissible, amounted to twenty-seven thousand and ninety-nine; that of this number, comprehending four hundred and ten invalids, fourteen thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight are stated as engaged for the war; that the remainder, by the expiration of enlistments, will be decreased by the 31st of December two thousand and fifty-one; by the last of March six thousand four hundred and twenty-six; by the last of April (including the levies) eight thousand one hundred and eighty-one; by the last of June ten thousand one hundred and fifty-eight; by the last of September ten thousand seven hundred and nine; and by different periods, I believe shortly after, twelve thousand one hundred and fifty-seven.*

As I have observed, it cannot be supposed, that the whole of the troops borne upon the muster-rolls were either in service, or really in existence; for it will ever be found, for obvious reasons, that the amount of an army on paper will greatly exceed its real strength. Hence there are other deductions than those enumerated above, which must equally operate against the troops of every class; and I must farther beg leave to observe, that, besides these several deductions, there are of necessity very considerable and constant drafts of men from the regiments for artificers, armorers, matrosses, wagoners, and the quartermaster's department; so that we cannot estimate our operating force in the field, with any propriety or justice, by any means as high as it may appear at first view on paper. This

* The troops from the several States enlisted for different periods of time.

point might be more fully illustrated by referring to the column of *present fit for duty*, in all general returns, and comparing it with the total amount. Nor is there any reason to expect, that these large and heavy drafts from the regiments will cease; but on the contrary it is much to be feared, from the increased and increasing difficulties in getting men, that they will be still greater.

Having shown what will be the ultimate and greatest possible amount of our force at the several periods above mentioned, according to the abstract of the muster-rolls for October, supposing every man borne upon them to have been at that time and to remain in service, agreeably to the terms noted in the abstract, which however is by no means supposable, as already observed, I shall take the liberty, with all possible deference, to offer my sentiments on the only mode that appears to me competent, in the present situation of things, to placing and keeping our battalions on a respectable footing, if Congress judge the measure essential; and I trust, in doing this, it will not be deemed that I have exceeded my duties. If it should, my apology must be that it proceeded from a desire to place the business of raising the levies, whom we may have occasion to employ in future, on a more regular and certain system than has been adopted, or at least put in practice; and one by which the public will derive benefits from their service.

In the more early stages of the contest, when men might have been enlisted for the war, no man, as my whole conduct and the uniform tenor of my letters will evince, was ever more opposed to short enlistments than I was; and, while there remained a prospect of obtaining recruits upon a permanent footing in the first instance, as far as duty and a regard to my station

would permit, I urged my sentiments in favor of it. But the prospect of keeping up an army by voluntary enlistments being changed, or at least standing on too precarious and uncertain a footing to depend on for the exigency of our affairs, I took the liberty, in February, 1778, in a particular manner to lay before the Committee of Arrangement, then with the army at Valley Forge, a plan for an annual draft, as the surest and most certain, if not the only means left us, of maintaining the army on a proper and respectable ground. And, more and more confirmed in the propriety of this opinion by the intervention of a variety of circumstances unnecessary to detail, I again took the freedom of urging the plan to the committee of conference in January last; and having reviewed it in every point of light and found it right, or at least the best that has occurred to me, I hope I shall be excused by Congress for offering it to them, and in time for carrying it into execution for the next year, if they should conceive it necessary for the States to complete their quotas of troops.

The plan I would propose is, that each State be informed by Congress annually of the *real deficiency* of its troops, and called upon to make it up, or such less specific number as Congress may think proper, by a draft; that the men drafted join the army by the 1st of January, and serve till the 1st of January in the succeeding year; that from the time the drafts join the army, the officers of the States from which they come, be authorized and directed to use their endeavours to enlist them for the war, under the bounties to the officers themselves and the recruits granted by the act of the 23d of January last, namely, ten dollars to the officers for each recruit, and two hundred to the recruits themselves; that all State, county, and town boun-

ties to drafts, if practicable, be entirely abolished, on account of the uneasiness and disorders they create among the soldiers, the desertions they produce, and for other reasons, which will readily occur; that, on or before the 1st of October annually, an abstract or return similar to the present one, be transmitted to Congress, to enable them to make their requisitions to each State with certainty and precision. This I would propose as a general plan to be pursued; and I am persuaded that this, or one nearly similar to it, will be found the best now in our power, as it will be attended with the least expense to the public, will place the service on the footing of order and certainty, and will be the only one that can advance the general interest to any great extent. If the plan is established, besides placing the service on the footing of more order and certainty, than it will otherwise have, we shall, I should hope, by the exertions of the officers be able to increase the number of our troops on permanent engagements for the war; especially if we should be so fortunate as to be in a condition to hold out to the drafts, that would engage, a certainty of their receiving the bounty of clothing stipulated by the public to be furnished to the troops, and which is so essential to the interest of both.

The advantage of a well-digested, general, and uniform system for levying and bringing them to the army at a particular time to serve to a fixed period is obvious. We may then form our plans of operation with some degree of certainty, and determine with more propriety and exactness on what we may or may not be able to do; and the periods for joining and serving, which I have taken the liberty to mention, appear to me the most proper for a variety of considerations. It being in January when it is proposed that the recruits shall join, and when the enemy cannot operate, they

will get seasoned and accustomed in some measure to a camp life, before the campaign opens, and will have four or five months to acquire discipline and some knowledge of manœuvres without interruption; and their service being extended to the same time in the succeeding year, the public will have all the benefits that can be derived from their aid for a whole campaign. According to the plan on which the business has been conducted, the public incurs a very heavy expense, on account of recruits (all that the one proposed is liable to), and scarcely receives any benefit from them. The levies, that have been raised, have come to the army so irregularly, in such a scattered, divided way, and at such late periods generally, that the aid they were intended to give has never been received, or at least but to a very limited and partial extent; and the time, for which they were engaged, has been spent in gaining a seasoning to the camp and discipline, and a greater part of it in winter-quarters, when they ought to have been in the field; or they must have been sent there raw and untutored, a circumstance, which may lead in some critical moment before an enemy to most fatal consequences. The abstract with its remarks will show Congress when the recruits for this campaign joined, and of what little importance their aid could have been, if the enemy had not been prevented by the occurrence of a variety of distant events, as providential as they were fortunate for us, from pursuing the vigorous measures there was but too much reason to believe they would have otherwise been capable of, and on which it seemed they had determined. I am, Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON, VIRGINIA.

Head-Quarters, West Point, 23 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The measure of the Council in remanding Governor Hamilton and his companions back to confinement, on their refusing to sign the parole tendered to them, is perfectly agreeable to the practice of the enemy. The particular part objected to, I have always understood, enters into the paroles given by our officers.* In regard to your letter of the 8th, I would hope with your Excellency, that there will be no necessity for a competition in cruelties with the enemy. Indeed, it is but justice to observe, that of late, or rather since Sir Henry Clinton has had the command, the treatment of our prisoners has been more within the line of humanity, and in general very different from that which they experienced under his predecessors. I shall not fail, however, as a matter of duty, to pay proper attention to such deviations from this conduct, as may appear the result of mere wantonness or cruelty, and have not been incurred by the irregularities of our prisoners.

I have the honor to be, &c.

* A parole was drawn up, and tendered to Governor Hamilton and his companions, by which they were to pledge themselves not to offer any offence to the United States either by actions or language. They refused to subscribe this parole, insisting that they should be allowed entire freedom of speech. Upon this refusal, they were remanded to prison; but they afterwards subscribed the parole, and were released from confinement. Mr. Jefferson wrote; "Lamothe and Dejean have given their paroles, and are at Hanover Court-House. Hamilton, Hay, and four others are still obstinate. They are therefore still in close confinement. I wrote full information of this matter to General Phillips, from whom I had received letters on the subject. I cannot in reason believe, that the enemy, on receiving this information, will venture to impose any new distresses upon our officers in captivity with them. It is my duty, as well as it was my promise to the Virginia captives, to take measures for discovering any change, which may be made in their situation. For this purpose I must apply for your Excellency's interposition."

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

West Point, 24 November, 1779.

SIR,

I am now using my best endeavours to get things in train for putting the army in quarters. The distribution of clothing, owing to its late arrival, the scantiness of the stock, the diversity in color and in quality, its not having been properly assorted when packed, and the absence of clothiers under various pretences for getting articles that would be deficient, have proved a source of the most irksome delay and difficulty. Owing to those causes, and to two rainy days, the North Carolina troops could not move from Windsor till yesterday, notwithstanding the most active exertions of Colonel Clarke, who commands them, and of all parties engaged, to effect it. I hope, however, that what clothing was here, and to be distributed here, will be so delivered by to-morrow evening, that all the troops, except those intended for the garrison, will be able to move towards the places destined for their cantonment without more delay.

In fixing on these places, we are obliged to regard in a particular manner the security of this post, the security of the army, the best protection that circumstances will admit of to the country, our supplies of provisions and forage, and the means of transportation. From the fullest consideration of the point it appears, that these objects in a combined view will be best answered by quartering the cavalry in Connecticut; a brigade at Danbury; a sufficient garrison here, including the post at King's Ferry and the Continental Village, to secure them at least against any sudden attempts on the part of the enemy; a small body of troops at the entrance of the Clove; the main body of the army in the coun-

try in the neighbourhood of the Scotch Plains, if the circumstances of wood and water will admit. The quartermaster-general and other officers are now advanced and employed, and have been for some days, in reconnoitring for a proper position. The instant matters will permit, I shall go forward myself.*

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER, IN CONGRESS.†

West Point, 24 November, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

General Duportail has returned; but Colonel Hamilton not yet, being detained unfortunately by a slight indisposition at Morristown. I hope it will be soon over. The resolution, which you allude to, has reached me. You will see by my official letter of this date to Congress, that, after receiving their letter, with a copy of General Lincoln's despatches, I did not wait for their decision on the point submitted.‡ These despatches,

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* The command at West Point, after the removal of Washington's head-quarters, was offered to General Gates, but he expressed a wish to be absent for a few months in Virginia, on account of his private affairs. His request was granted, and General Heath was appointed to command at West Point.

† General Schuyler, having resigned his commission in the army, took his seat in Congress as a delegate from New York on the 16th of November.

‡ When intelligence of the failure of the expedition against Savannah reached Congress, they instructed the President to write to General Washington, and request him to take such measures as he should think most proper in consequence of it. Washington received the news before the letter arrived, and being convinced, that no coöperation between his army and Count d'Estaing's fleet could possibly take place after that event, and so late in the season, he wrote immediately to Governor Clinton and General Fellows, desiring them to dismiss the New York and Massachusetts militia, who had assembled for the purpose of aiding a combined operation.

and a copy of the act from the Marine Committee, for the sailing of the three frigates, which had been detained for a coöperation, seemed explicit as to the line of conduct to be pursued.* The disaster at Savannah puts matters, at least, on a delicate footing at the south. I do not know what we can do more. You will have seen, before this, a particular statement of the army, transmitted in my public letter of the 18th. Our finances and depreciation are alarming. We have much to apprehend from them, if they are not remedied.

I have touched upon the subject of the commissary. I thank you for the hint, as I shall for every one you may be pleased to favor me with. The gentlemen of my family are sensibly obliged by the manner in which you mention them, and request you to receive their respective compliments. You will see I am in a hurry, and implicitly confide in your indulgent excuse for this hasty scrawl, and have only to add, that I am, with great truth, your affectionate, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Peekskill, 29 November, 1779.

Sir,

I have received sundry reports, though not through the channels I could have wished, and yet through such as seem to make the reports worthy of credit, that the enemy are making or preparing for a considerable embarkation of troops from New York. From this cir-

* Three Continental frigates had been detained at Boston, waiting the approach of Count d'Estaing's fleet, with which they were intended to coöperate. As soon as the failure at Savannah was known, the Marine Committee ordered these three frigates to proceed to the southward.

cumstance, although their destination is not known, and from the importance of securing the States of Georgia and South Carolina, which possibly may be their object, and which, from the accounts I have received from Colonel Laurens, are in a more defenceless condition than I had ever apprehended, I have determined, ill as they can be spared, to put the whole of the Virginia troops in motion, except those whose terms of service will expire by the last of January, to give them farther succour, if Congress shall judge it expedient, after considering the state and extent of our force, as communicated in my letter of the 18th. I am fully of opinion, that this detachment can be ill afforded; but possibly, from the disagreeable consequences that might result from the enemy's gaining possession of those States, or even of attempting it, it may be advisable to hazard a good deal for their security. At any rate, from the unhappy reduction of our force by the expiration of enlistments, we should be obliged to pursue great caution for our security; and, if this detachment is made, it will be necessary to increase it, and to act if possible more on a defensive plan.

From the great distance from hence to Charleston, from Virginia's lying in the way, and from the inclement season, I am persuaded, if the troops proceed by land, that their number, by fatigue, sickness, desertion, and the expiration of their enlistments, will be so reduced, that their aid would be of scarcely any consideration when they arrived. In this view, and as their going will deprive the army here of a material part of its force, I cannot think, if Congress should determine the measure expedient, that they should proceed by land. I am satisfied a land march would exhaust the whole of the detachment, and but little if any aid would be derived from it to the southern army. From these con-

siderations Congress will be pleased to determine, how far it may be advisable and practicable to send the troops by sea. A boisterous season, winds generally blowing off the continent, and the risk of capture, are all circumstances, I will take the liberty to observe, that appear to me of importance in determining the point. Without a good convoy I should apprehend the measure would at any rate be unadvisable, as the capture or loss of the troops would give a severe shock to our affairs, and such as we should not recover from without difficulty.

How far this may be practicable will be with Congress to determine. If it cannot be obtained, and Congress think this detachment should be sent, yet I would take the liberty to suggest farther, that the troops had better sail from the Chesapeake Bay, than from the Delaware, as they will be more distant from New York, and of consequence not so liable to fall in with any of the enemy's ships and cruisers.

And as it frequently happens at this season, that vessels are blown off the coast and kept at sea a considerable time, I should suppose it would be necessary for the transport vessels to be provisioned, wooded, and watered at least for six weeks. A passage may be effected perhaps in a few days, but provision should be made against contingencies; and in doing this it may be material to consider the state of our supplies, and whether they will admit of so large a quantity being shipped. It also appears to me, if the embarkation is made, that it should be in transports employed solely for the purpose; as events possibly might arise, if they were on board other vessels, that might render it at least inconvenient for them to proceed. I am now thus far on my way to Jersey, and I shall put the Virginia troops in motion, as soon as it can be done,

for Philadelphia. Congress will please to have, against their arrival, such instructions ready as they may deem necessary with respect to their farther movements.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 7 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that I have received a letter from a confidential correspondent in New York, containing the following pargraph. "The men-of-war at the Hook have taken in water for several months, and on Friday the admiral went down with all his baggage. A fleet for Cork and a number of vessels for England will sail in a few days, some of which are loaded with valuable cargoes. However, some think that they will not sail till D'Estaing has left the coast, or till there is some arrival from England. Privateering is now almost over, not more than six being now out and few fitting. There have not any prizes of value arrived for some time past."

But the most important part of the letter relates to the indefatigable endeavours of the enemy to increase the depreciation of our currency, by increasing its quantity in counterfeits. It asserts, as a matter of certainty, that reams of the paper made for the last emissions struck by Congress have been procured from Philadelphia. The writer had taken much but fruitless pains to detect the persons concerned. The prevailing opinion, he says, among the most knowing in New York is, that a considerable part of the army will be sent to Georgia, as soon as it is known that the French fleet has left the coast; and it is thought by some, that several regi-

ments will go to the West Indies. He speaks of the arrival of a packet, which left Falmouth the 7th of September, posterior to the period to which the different accounts refer the engagements between the fleets, and which brings no intelligence of such an event.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Morristown, 7 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

You have both obliged and answered me by your communication of the 27th ultimo. I have not seen the piece to which you allude, but I should be more surprised had you been suffered to escape without paying a tax so ancient and customary. When one is overrated in this way, it is very natural to complain, or to feel disgust at the ingratitude of the world; though I believe with you, that to persevere in one's duty and be silent, is the best answer to calumny. We are all in your debt for what you have done for us in Holland.* I would flatter myself, from the reception of your correspondence, and the superior advantages which our commerce holds out to the Dutch, that we shall experience in a little time the most favorable effects from this quarter. I know not what to think of the invention of Mr. Sayres. It appears a very extraordinary one. I can only wish that the thing may be practicable, and that we may have it in our power to be the first to give it patronage, and to profit by what it promises. We have taken up our quarters at this place for the winter.

* Governor Livingston was in correspondence with Baron Van der Capellen of Holland, who was a warm friend to liberty, and took a lively interest in the American revolution.

The main army lies within three or four miles of the town. If you are called to this part of the country, I hope you will do me the honor of a visit.

I am, dear Sir, with great respect, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN, IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Morristown, 12 December, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 22d of October, by Colonel Laurens, to whose information I am indebted for a very particular account of the situation of affairs at the southward. I had previously to his arrival been furnished by Congress with copies of your despatches by Mr. Clarkson, who came forward himself to head-quarters. By him I had the mortification of hearing of the ill success of the allied arms before Savannah. While I regret the misfortune, I feel a very sensible pleasure in contemplating the gallant behaviour of the officers and men of the French and American army; and it adds not a little to my consolation to learn, that instead of the mutual reproaches, which too often follow the failure of enterprises depending upon the coöperation of troops of different nations, their confidence in and esteem for each other are increased. I am happy in believing, that the delicacy and propriety of your conduct upon every occasion have contributed much to this agreeable circumstance.

Before Colonel Laurens's arrival, the two regiments of North Carolina had marched; and immediately upon finding, from your letters and from him, the reduced state of your Continental force, and the little dependence to be put upon the precarious supplies of militia, I submitted to Congress the propriety of detaching the whole

of the Virginia line; expressing at the same time my willingness to part with them, ill as they could be spared, should they judge it expedient, after a full consideration of all circumstances. Congress having determined upon the propriety of the measure, the troops began to march the day before yesterday; and I hope the whole will be in motion this day, should not the weather prevent them. I have strongly recommended the transportation of them by water, if vessels can be procured, and a convoy ensured. The advantages of this mode over a march by land are too obvious to need mentioning. The unhappy system of short enlistments operates just now most forcibly upon the troops, as well as upon the whole line of the army. I shall take the liberty, in my turn, of referring you to Colonel Laurens for a minute account of our circumstances and situation; and I am happy in having the testimony of so able a judge and so good a man, to witness that the utmost has been done by me to afford relief to the quarter, which so loudly and with so much reason calls for assistance. I am, with sincere esteem, &c.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

Morristown, 13 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose for your Excellency sundry papers received from Major Ballard, respecting the effects of certain disaffected persons, taken and sold on the frontier. You will perceive he is in danger of being prosecuted for felony. There appears not, from the face of the papers, to have been any thing blamable in Major Ballard's conduct, as he only acted in obedience to his orders, on which must be charged whatever

irregularity there may have been in the affair. As the good of the service sometimes requires things to be done in the military line, which cannot be supported by the civil law, prosecutions of this kind may discourage officers from the discharge of their duty. It were therefore to be wished that they could be prevented, except where there are appearances of oppression or fraud. Nothing of this offers itself in Major Ballard's representation; though it is difficult to judge without hearing the other parties. I take the liberty, however, of troubling your Excellency with the affair, that, unless you have reason to believe there has been a spirit of plunder in the transaction, you may have the goodness to interpose your influence for preventing the intended prosecutions. To make this the more practicable, I have directed the money, which arose on the sales, said to be deposited with Lieutenant-Colonel Whiting, to be paid to your Excellency's order. But if, on inquiry, any of the officers seem to have been actuated by improper views, I wish them to suffer the penalty of the law, and shall be ready to promote every measure for doing justice to those who have been injured. With every sentiment of respect and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WOODFORD.

Morristown, 13 December, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to find that the artillery is at length ready, and that the rear of the Virginia troops will march early to-morrow morning. By advices this day received from Congress, it seems to be their intention, that the whole shall move by water from the

head of Elk to Williamsburg, and thence by land to South Carolina. I wish it were practicable to send them by water; but, by this arrangement, I take it for granted it is not. I am apprehensive, as the troops pass through their own State, the march will be attended with very considerable desertion; but I rely upon your vigilance and care, that you will take every precaution for preventing it, as far as may be possible. The most rigid discipline will be indispensable for this purpose. A chain of sentries round every encampment will be the best security.

I sincerely wish you and the troops under your command a comfortable march and a speedy arrival. The interests of America may very essentially require the latter, towards which I am persuaded you will do all in your power. Nothing will make me happier, than to hear at all times, that the Virginia line distinguishes itself, in every qualification that does honor to the military profession. Its composition is excellent; and a strict attention to discipline will always entitle it to vie with any corps in this, or in any other service. They are going into a new, and probably important field, to act with troops to whom they have hitherto been strangers. This ought to prove an additional incitement to a spirit of emulation. My affection for the troops, and my concern for the credit of the army under my command, as well as for their own credit, make me anxiously desire that the officers may exert themselves to cultivate that perfection in discipline, on which the usefulness and reputation of a corps depend. Similar motives, joined to a regard for the honor of the State to which they belong, will, I am confident, be felt with all the force they deserve; and will inspire them to a zealous and punctual discharge of their duty in *all its parts*. For here permit me to add, that,

though bravery and good conduct, in time of action, are very essential, yet they are by no means the most material parts of an officer's duty. To train and prepare men for the field, without which no exertion in the moment of action will avail much, to supply their necessary wants, so far as circumstances will permit; to restrain licentiousness; to support the honor and dignity of the corps; to be attentive to the clothing, seeing that it is always in place, in order, and well put on, without which, a soldier in rags and a soldier in uniform differ little in appearance; to have the arms and accoutrements always in order; in a word, to abide strictly by military rules, regulations, and orders; these constitute the essence of a soldier, and are characteristic of good officers. Without these no service can be well conducted, and every service must be disagreeable, sluggish, and expensive; partaking more of the nature of militia, than the regularity of well organized troops, which *may* and *ought* to move like clockwork, where the component parts discharge their respective duties with propriety and exactness. I entreat you to communicate what I have said to the gentlemen of the line; and, at the same time, to assure them of my warmest esteem and best wishes for their welfare and success. With the truest regard, I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL DUPORTAIL.

Morristown, 15 December, 1779.

SIR,

You will be pleased to meet the quarter-master-general to-morrow morning, and, in conjunction with him, examine all the grounds in the environs of our present encampment, and make a written report to me,

without delay, of the different spots which appear most proper to be occupied, in case of any movement of the enemy towards us; pointing out the comparative advantages and disadvantages of each. You will yourself critically examine our present position, and report your opinion, how far it may be susceptible of defence, and what works will be necessary for the purpose. The positions, in the first case, are to be considered relatively to an army of ten thousand men; and the order of battle proposed, as far as circumstances and the nature of the ground will permit, is in two lines, one of three divisions, and the other of two divisions; but as the number will be diminished some time hence, by the expiration of the term of service for which a part of the men are engaged, you will pay attention to this, in the consideration of the position we now occupy, and the works proper for its defence. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Morristown, 15 December, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving a few days since, by Captain Bruin, your letter of the 1st instant. I assure you, I am sensibly touched by so striking an instance of your friendship, at a time and in a manner, that demonstrates its sincerity, and confirms the opinion I have always entertained of your sentiments towards me. I wish you to believe, that your uneasiness, on the score you mention, had never the least foundation. A slender acquaintance with the world must convince every man, that actions, not words, are the true criterion of the attachment of his friends, and that the most

liberal professions of good will are very far from being the surest marks of it. I should be happy if my own experience had afforded fewer examples of the little dependence to be placed upon them. I am particularly indebted to you for the interesting information you give me of the views of a certain party. Against intrigues of this kind, incident to every man in a public station, his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event.*

I flatter myself it is unnecessary for me to repeat to you, how high a place you hold in my esteem. The confidence you have experienced, and the manner in which you have been employed on several important occasions, testify the value I set upon your military qualifications, and the regret I must feel, that circumstances have deprived the army of your services. The pleasure I shall always take in an interchange of

* General Sullivan's resignation as major-general in the army was accepted by Congress on the 30th of November. In his letter to General Washington he had expressed very strong professions of friendship, adding that he thought he could do it with the more propriety as he was about to leave the service, and could not be suspected of speaking under the influence of interested motives. He then went on to say;—

"Permit me to inform your Excellency, that the faction raised against you in 1777, into which General Conway was unfortunately and imprudently drawn, is not yet destroyed. The members are waiting to collect strength, and seize some favorable moment to appear in force. I speak not from conjecture, but from certain knowledge. Their plan is to take every method of proving the danger arising from a commander, who enjoys the full and unlimited confidence of his army, and alarm the people with the prospects of imaginary evils; nay, they will endeavour to convert your virtue into arrows, with which they will seek to wound you.

"The next stage is to persuade Congress, that the military power of America should be placed in three or four different hands, each having a separate quarter of the continent assigned to him, and each commander to answer to Congress only for his conduct. This, they say, will prevent an aspiring commander from enslaving his country, and put it in the power of Congress, with the assistance of the other commanders, to punish the attempt. This is a refinement in politics, and improvement on public

good offices in whatever station you may hereafter be placed, will be the best confirmation of the personal regard with which I have been and am, very sincerely and truly, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 17 December, 1779.

SIR,

The bearer of this, the Reverend Mr. D. represents to me, that he has been employed by order of Congress, as missionary to the Indian tribes in the eastern department, from which trust he is now returning. On conversing with him, he has expressed a willingness to go into Canada as a secret emissary. He appears to be intelligent; and, if there is good reason to depend on his fidelity, from the trial already made of him, he may be very useful in that way. His function, and his being a Frenchman, possessing the language and manners of the people, would give him signal advantages. He must gain intelligence of the enemy, sound the disposition of the inhabitants, and instil into them those ideas which Congress would wish to prevail. But the same advantages would make

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virtue, which Greece and Rome could never boast. The present time is unfavorable to their designs. They well know, that the voice of citizens and soldiers would be almost unanimously against them; but they wait a more favorable opportunity, which they will certainly improve. I am well convinced that they cannot succeed; yet I thought it my duty, in the moment of my departure, to give you this notice, that you may not only be on your guard, but avoid entrusting those persons in matters where your interest and honor are nearly concerned. I persuade myself, that your steady and prudent conduct will baffle every attempt." — *December 1st.*

The immediate grounds of General Sullivan's apprehensions at this time I have not been able to discover; but it will be found hereafter, that General Greene had similar impressions three months later. See Washington's letter to him, dated March 26th, 1780.

him proportionably mischievous, if he should be in the interest of the enemy. He says a charge of this nature was falsely brought against him by the commanding officer at Machias. It should be a point well ascertained, before he is entrusted with a new employment. Should Congress find him worthy of confidence, and determine on sending him into Canada, I should be glad to be honored with a communication of the instructions they may give him, and be permitted to add such others relative to the military objects, as may be consistent with theirs. With the most perfect respect I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 18 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am fully of opinion, that those people who undertake to procure intelligence under cover of carrying

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* The desire of an expedition to Canada still prevailed with many persons. When General Gates went to Philadelphia, after the British had evacuated Rhode Island, he consulted M. de la Luzerne on the subject. Gates proposed, that five or six thousand American troops should pass into Canada, and that the commander should be authorized to make overtures to the Canadians, that they should enter into the American Union, and form a State as free and independent as any of the others; and that he should promise them a reimbursement of about two millions and a half of livres, as an equivalent for the depreciation of the Continental money, that would be dispersed among them during the expedition; and, to induce a confidence in those assurances, that the King of France should afford a guarantee for the payment. M. de la Luzerne objected to this plan, that it was not practicable, that the King would hardly listen to the guarantee, and that, if the United States had means of offensive operations, while the enemy had so large a possession of their territory, they had better apply them to the conquest of the Floridas. — *MS. Letter from Luzerne to Vergennes, December 13th.*

The Spanish agent, Miralles, had recently received instructions from the governor of Cuba, directing him, if possible, to induce Congress to

produce into New York, and bringing out goods in return, attend more to their own emoluments than to the business with which they are charged; and we have generally found their information so vague and trifling, that there is no placing dependence upon it. Besides, it opens a door to a very extensive and pernicious traffic. You seem to intimate, that an advantageous chain of intelligence might be established by the means of money. Be pleased to make inquiry into this matter, and, if you find proper persons for the purpose, let me know the terms, and the sum requisite, that I may see whether it comes within the limits of our scanty funds in hard money, as I suppose that kind is meant. But be pleased to say whether that or paper is the object. I approve of the measures you have taken with the flag-boats; and it is my wish, that those persons, whoever they may be, who are concerned in the practice of bringing goods from New York, may be discovered. I am not acquainted with the laws of the State respecting the seizure of goods, but I wish you to inform yourself of them, and put them strictly in execution. I am, &c.

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unite with the Spaniards in the conquest of East Florida, and, by applying all their force against St. Augustine, to prevent the British from sending troops to Pensacola and Mobile. An ulterior project, also, was to attack the British posts on the borders of Louisiana. Congress expressed a disposition to facilitate these designs; but at the present juncture, when the enemy was in Georgia, and threatening Carolina, it was not possible. A plan of connecting a loan from Spain with the Conquest of Florida was discussed, but was finally dropped without being brought to maturity. It was never the policy of France to aid the United States in making conquests, either at the north or the south; nor was it ever the policy of Spain to aid them in any thing, which should have a tendency to confirm their independence.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WOODFORD.

Morristown, 18 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

My nephew, George Augustine Washington, seems to have a warm desire to enter the service. Although I think it rather late in the day (contest, I should say) to begin a military career, yet, in gratification of his wishes, I should be glad to indulge him, if there be any ensigncies which want filling in the Virginia line. Should this be the case, and he is recommended to the State, I should be glad to receive their approbation as soon as may be, that a commission may be obtained from the Board of War; after which, I shall keep him for some time doing the duty of ensign in my guard; at least till he can be made somewhat acquainted with his duty as an officer. I have not mentioned this matter to any but yourself; nor is it my wish that it should take place, if it should interfere in the smallest degree with the rights or reasonable expectations of any others. If he is appointed at all, I could wish it may be to one of the oldest and best regiments. With great regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH, AT WEST POINT.

Morristown, 21 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Notwithstanding the long preparations at New York, and the strong appearances of large detachments being made from thence, it seems certain, from very recent advices, that no troops have sailed as yet, and that the enemy hold themselves in collected force. What their designs really are, I have not been able to learn,

although I have taken all the pains in my power to effect it.* The southern States and the West Indies present themselves, as the most probable objects of their attention, and this seems to be the prevailing opinion; but, as their delay cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, we should guard in the best manner we can against every possible contingency. I would therefore suppose it possible, that the preparation of transports may be a feint, and that the enemy may have it in contemplation to aim a sudden stroke, either against the Highland posts, or against this army. The latter event appears by far the more probable of the two.

My former instructions, and the conventional signals, which have been established, and to which they referred, were only calculated to produce succour from the militia in case of a serious movement of the enemy in the first instance; but it will be equally necessary, if they direct their operations against this army. In this event it may be also absolutely essential for you, and the troops under your command, to march and give me support; and in order to this, I wish the signals, by a previous and immediate arrangement between you and Governor Clinton, may be made to answer the purpose of calling out the militia to garrison the posts during the absence of the Continental troops. They should not be drawn out for less than ten or twelve days, and if practicable, on account of our supplies of flour, it will be advisable for each man

* A large detachment of the enemy was in readiness to depart for the South, but was delayed till it could be ascertained what measures would be pursued by Count d'Estaing, in consequence of the disaster at Savannah. General Clinton wrote to Lord George Germain; — "Every disposition is made for the embarkation of the force destined to act in Carolina, and I wait in anxious suspense for further accounts of the French fleet. Until we have these, it is thought too hazardous to proceed." — *MS. Letter, December* 15th.

to bring with him flour for that time; this to be paid for by the public. You will communicate with the Governor on these several points, who, I am convinced, will do all in his power to promote them. On your hearing of the enemy's being in motion towards this army, in such a way that you can depend upon it, you will make the signals for calling in the militia, and hold the troops of the garrison in readiness to march at the shortest warning. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Morristown, 21 December, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The situation of our army at this time, compared with that of the enemy, makes it necessary we should be very much upon our guard. They have more than double our force collected, and we are mouldering away daily. They have been some time past making a show of embarkation; but whether it is sincere, or a mere feint to lull us into security, is not easy to tell; but, if they really design to make large detachments, they must be restrained by their uncertainty of the motions of the French squadron; and, if this or any other obstruction should continue, Sir Henry Clinton may think himself bound to improve the interval in an offensive operation against this army. He cannot justify remaining inactive with a force so superior, and so many temptations to action. His enemies already clamor, and charge him with want of enterprise. He is not ignorant of the smallness of our numbers, and the distress of our magazines. He knows we have been obliged, for want of forage, to send the horses of the army to a distance from it. He cannot be in-

sensible of the evils he would bring upon us by dislodging us from our winter-quarters. The loss of our huts at this inclement season would be a most serious calamity. This loss would in all probability be accompanied by that of a great part of our baggage, and a number of our men by desertions. It is difficult to determine the extent of the evils, if at so critical a juncture we should experience a failure of provisions, which we should have every reason to apprehend. Your Excellency's discernment makes it useless to enlarge.

But it is our duty to do all we can to avert the danger. Should the event I have mentioned take place, we shall want the aid of the whole strength of the State. The enclosed official letter is an application for the purpose, which I have thought proper to accompany with this confidential view of our circumstances for your private information. I entreat your Excellency to give my application your support, that the measure recommended may be immediately put in a proper train. To me it appears of indispensable importance. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Head-Quarters, 22 December, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter of yesterday, and am extremely concerned to find that you meet with such difficulties in quartering the officers, whose rank and situation require that they should be lodged in the houses in the vicinity of the army. I regret that the inhabitants should be unwilling to give shelter to men, who have made and are still making every sacrifice in

the service of their country; and that the magistrates should refuse to give you effectual aid in a matter to which, in my opinion, by a liberal and necessary construction of the law, their authority is fully competent.

The dilemma is perplexing. On one hand, I wish nothing so much as to avoid the least deviation from the line prescribed by the law; on the other, it is impossible that the officers can remain without proper covering. If the obstacles cannot be removed, so as to satisfy the law, necessity decides that you must proceed in quartering the officers yourself in such houses, as the good of the service may require, having all possible regard to the circumstances of the inhabitants, that none may be distressed or incommoded more than is unavoidable. To this I am persuaded your own disposition will induce you to pay the strictest attention. But before you have recourse to this step, you will make one more application to the magistrates, which you will be pleased to do in writing, and request their answer also in writing. You will expose to them the reasonableness and necessity of their concurrence, and inform them what we shall be compelled to do, if they decline giving their assistance with cordiality and efficacy. Should they again refuse, you will then have no alternative but to do as I have mentioned.

I am, Sir, &c.

TO COLONEL ARMAND.

Morristown, 28 December, 1779.

SIR,

Colonel Hamilton delivered to me your letter. It is with pleasure I declare to you, that I have the most favorable opinion of your conduct and services, par-

ticularly in the course of the last campaign, in which circumstances enabled you to be more active and useful. But, notwithstanding this, so far from recommending the promotion you desire, I confess to you with frankness, I should be unwilling to see it take place, because it would be injurious to the pretensions of a great number of senior officers, who have every title to consideration. If, however, Congress have given you reason to expect this advancement, they will no doubt perform their engagement.

The letter or certificate you request, on the footing on which it is placed, can only be necessary in case of the failure of your intended application to Congress. When this is decided, if you do not succeed, I shall be ready to give you an ample testimony of the sense I entertain of your merit, to satisfy your friends in France, that your disappointment is not to be attributed to any cause unfavorable to your reputation.

I am, with great regard, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 2 January, 1780.

SIR,

Congress were pleased by their resolution of the 1st of January last, to express their desire of retaining Brigadier-General Duportail, Colonel Radière, Colonel Laumoy, and Lieutenant-Colonel Gouvion in the service of these States for another campaign, if agreeable to them. These gentlemen, having accepted the invitation, have now completed the term to which it extended; and it is with pleasure I can inform Congress, that their subsequent conduct has more than justified the opinion expressed in my letter on which that reso-

lution was founded. They have been particularly useful in the course of this last period, and have acquired general esteem and confidence. I cannot forbear adding, that the better the gentleman at the head of the corps is known, the more he is found to be a man of abilities and of distinguished military merit.

As the continuance of these gentlemen in the service, under present circumstances, appears to me indispensable, I have consulted General Duportail about their further intentions. His answer in behalf of the corps was, that they continue to have a sincere desire of being useful to the United States, and will esteem themselves highly honored by remaining in the service, if it be the wish of Congress, and measures are taken, through the channel of the French minister, to obtain permission of their court; unless there should be a war by land kindled in Europe, in which case it would be their duty to return and devote their service to their own country.

It now remains with Congress to signify their intentions upon the subject; and, if they deem the continuance of these gentlemen necessary, to acquaint them with their wishes, and take the proper steps to obtain the concurrence of the French court, without which they cannot justify their stay. A period being limited in the last resolution makes this second application necessary, as the gentlemen could not with propriety stay beyond the time for which Congress had engaged them, without a new signification of their pleasure. I submit whether it may not be advisable to extend the requisition to the duration of the war.* It is to be lamented, that Colonel Radière is no longer among the

* Congress voted to retain these officers in the service during the war; if it should be consistent with their inclination and duty to their King.

number. Congress have no doubt heard of his death, which was regretted, as the loss of a very valuable officer. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL IRVINE.

Head-Quarters, 4 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

We are not under less embarrassing and distressful circumstances in this quarter for provisions, than those you have represented in your letter of this day's date. Of the scanty pittance we have distributed to the army, the last is nearly exhausted, and without a prospect of any adequate and immediate succour. Amidst the difficulties, which occur on this occasion, to keep the army together and draw from the country a supply of provision, it is not easy to determine what course we should adopt.

Should the provision that you have borrowed from the inhabitants entirely fail, before we can assist you from this quarter, the measure which appears to me the most eligible, and which must be executed in case of extremity, is, upon an estimate of the cattle and provision in the vicinity of your command, to assess such a proportion as can be spared by the respective inhabitants. In doing this, every possible attention is to be paid to the privileges of citizens, and to obviate, as much as is in our power, those clamors or feelings that may arise on the occasion. I would wish you, therefore, to call upon the magistrates (not in their official capacity, but as men of influence and knowledge of their neighbourhood) of the district which is to furnish the quota, represent to them the situation of the troops and the unavoidable necessity of the measure, and, if

possible, get them to form an estimate or calculation of what each family can part with. But if they will not assist in this business as private gentlemen, you must derive your information from such other persons, as you think may be relied on. Where you have ascertained what each family of a district can spare, you will send out the party, which is to collect it, under prudent and attentive officers, who must be directed to give certificates to the inhabitants for the cattle, flour, and corn, either payable at the option of the owners at the present prices, or at the value such articles may rate when the payment shall be made. No milch cows should be assessed, and particular care should be taken to see the cattle weighed, and to certify only agreeably to this, as the public is apt to be imposed on when the weight is guessed at.

You will take all the previous steps for the execution of this plan, so as to have nothing to do but order out the parties when it becomes necessary. One or more of the inhabitants might attend to the weighing of the cattle, and to receiving the certificates for the rest. I need not recommend to you to economize with the most prudent hand your supplies, till our affairs in this respect can be placed on a better footing. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD, AT FORT PITT.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 4 January, 1780.

SIR,

Persuaded that a winter expedition against Detroit would have great advantages over a summer one, and be much more certain of success, I regret that the situation of affairs does not permit us to undertake it. We cannot at present furnish either the men or the

supplies necessary for it. From the estimate you make of the enemy's force there, your garrison with all the aid you could derive from the militia would not be equal to the attempt, especially as it must soon suffer so large a diminution by the departure of the men, whose terms of service are expiring; and even were it not too late in the season to march men such a distance in time, the same circumstance, and the detachment we are marching to South Carolina, put it out of our power to supply the defect of your number from this quarter. We must therefore of necessity defer the prosecution of the enterprise to a more favorable opportunity; but I would wish you not to discontinue your inquiries and preparations as far as convenient, for it is an object of too great importance to be lost sight of.

I fear also, that you will not have force for the expedition you propose to Natchez, though this is much more within the compass of our abilities. It would scarcely be prudent to leave Fort Pitt without a proportion of Continental troops for its defence. Sufficient dependence cannot be placed on the militia, and it is too valuable a post to be exposed to an accident. If you should leave only a hundred men there, besides those at the dependent posts, you would not have above one hundred and fifty for the expedition. Unless the number of the volunteers you expect exceeds what I should imagine, there would be great danger to the party. We are too little acquainted with the situation of Natchez to count with assurance upon success; and, if we should fail, the party returning against the stream so great a distance after a disappointment might run no small risk of being intercepted by the unfriendly Indians, through whom it would have to pass. I do not however mean to discourage the undertaking altogether, but to suggest the

difficulties that occur to me, that every circumstance may be well weighed previously to entering upon it. As the business will be attended with little additional expense, I should be glad if you would make every necessary preparation, and let me know when you will be completely ready, giving me an exact state of the force you will be able to employ on the expedition, and to leave at the garrisons under your command. Whatever you do should be under the veil of the greatest secrecy, as on this your success will depend. I shall be glad also, after closely examining your means, if you will give me your sentiments on the practicability of the enterprise.

If I can meet with any Frenchman that answers your description, willing to be so employed, I will send him to you; and you shall have an engineer, if you go upon any thing that requires one. I shall write to the Board of War, recommending that you may be supplied with a few pieces of artillery and a proportion of stores, to be ready against there may be a call for them. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 4 January, 1780

SIR,

The following gentlemen, Colonels Magaw, Mathews, Ely, and Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay have been permitted to come out of New York on parole, with some new propositions for an exchange of prisoners, the result of the conference between Major-General Phillips and themselves. These they will have the honor of submitting to Congress, as I do not conceive myself authorized to take any steps in the business

without their orders. The present proposals on the part of the enemy are more reasonable, than any they have offered before, and I should hope that they may be improved into an agreement that will give the desired relief. I have taken the liberty to offer these remarks, and shall be ready to execute whatever Congress may be pleased to direct; and, as they will be fully possessed of the propositions, I shall be happy that any instructions they may think proper to honor me with may be as particular as possible in delineating the objects they have in view.

I would farther beg leave to suggest, that if Congress approve the propositions, I think it will be advisable for them to request the several States to give up all the officers they have or claim as their prisoners, for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of ours, and as it would be the means of lessening the number of privates the enemy would otherwise receive. If the States consent to it, the names and rank of the officers, and the places they are at, cannot be too soon communicated to me. Indeed, I regret, as I ever have, that there should be any State prisoners of war. The system has been productive at least of great inconveniences and discontents. I do not know how it first obtained; but I am certain, if it is practicable, that it cannot be too soon abolished. The indulgence which Colonels Magaw, Mathews, Ely, and Ramsay have received, is limited to a few days. This consideration, as well as the importance of the business, will, I am convinced, give them the early attention of Congress. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* Congress referred this subject back to General Washington, renewing at the same time the full powers with which he had been invested on a former occasion for exchanging prisoners. They also requested the executive authorities of the several States to send to him a list of

TO COLONEL MATTHIAS OGDEN.

Morristown, 8 January, 1780.

SIR,

The present distresses of the army, with which you are well acquainted, have determined me to call upon the respective counties of the State for a proportion of grain and cattle according to the ability of each. For this purpose I have addressed the magistrates of every county to induce them to undertake the business. This mode I have preferred, as the one least inconvenient to the inhabitants; but in case the requisition should not be complied with, we must then raise the supplies ourselves, in the best manner we can. This I have signified to the magistrates.

I have pitched upon you to superintend the execution of this measure in the county of Essex. You will proceed thither with all despatch, and, calling upon the justices, will deliver to them the enclosed address, enforcing it with a more particular detail of the sufferings of the troops, the better to convince them of the necessity of their exertions. You will at the same time delicately let them know, that you are instructed, in case they do not take up the business immediately, to begin to impress the articles called for, throughout the county. You will press for an immediate answer, and govern yourself accordingly.

If it be a compliance, you will concert with them a proper place for the reception of the articles, and the time of delivery. The owners will bring their grain and cattle to this place, where the grain is to be meas-

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the names and rank of all the officers, and the number of privates, belonging to the enemy and held as prisoners of war in the respective States, that they might be included in a general exchange, should a cartel be effected. — *Journals, January 13th.*

ured and the cattle estimated by any two of the magistrates, in conjunction with the commissary, who will be sent to you for the purpose, and certificates given by the commissary, specifying the quantity of each article and the terms of payment. These are to be previously settled with the owners, who are to choose whether they will receive the present market price, which, if preferred, is to be inserted, or the market price at the time of payment. Immediately on receiving the answer of the magistrates, you will send me notice of what it is. In case of refusal, you will begin to impress, till you make up the quantity required. This you will do with as much tenderness as possible to the inhabitants, having regard to the stock of each individual, that no family may be deprived of its necessary subsistence. Milch cows are not to be included in the impress. To enable you to execute the business with more effect and less inconvenience, you will call upon well affected, active men in the county, and endeavour to engage their advice and assistance. You are also authorized to impress wagons for the transportation of the grain. A party will immediately march to assist you in the business of your mission. You will appoint a place with the adjutant-general, where the officer commanding the party will hear of you.

If the magistrates undertake the business, which I should infinitely prefer on every account, you will endeavour to prevail upon them to assign mills for the reception and preparation of such grain, as the commissary thinks will not be immediately useful in camp. I have reposed this trust in you, from a perfect confidence in your prudence, zeal, and respect for the rights of citizens. While your measures are adapted to the emergency, and you consult what you owe to the service, I am persuaded you will not forget, that, as we are

compelled by necessity to take the property of citizens for the support of an army, on whom their safety depends, we should be careful to manifest that we have a reverence for their rights, and wish not to do any thing, which that necessity and even their own good do not absolutely require. I am, &c.

TO THE MAGISTRATES OF NEW JERSEY.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 8 January, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

The present situation of the army, with respect to provisions, is the most distressing of any we have experienced since the beginning of the war. For a fortnight past the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing for want. They have been alternately without bread or meat the whole time, with a very scanty allowance of either and frequently destitute of both. They have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation and ought to excite the sympathy of their countrymen. But they are now reduced to an extremity no longer to be supported. Their distress has in some instances prompted the men to commit depredations on the property of the inhabitants, which at any other period would be punished with exemplary severity, but which can now be only lamented, as the effect of an unfortunate necessity. This evil would increase and soon become intolerable, were not an instant remedy to be applied.

The distresses we feel are chiefly owing to the early commencement and uncommon rigor of the winter, which have greatly obstructed the transportation of our supplies. These causes have obliged us to exhaust all the magazines in the vicinity of the camp; and, as

they continue to operate, we shall be unable to derive seasonable succour from our more distant resources. From present appearances it must be more than five weeks before we can have the benefit of any material supplies beyond the limits of this State; so that, unless an extraordinary exertion be made within the State to supply the wants of the army during that space, fatal consequences must unavoidably ensue. Your own discernment makes it needless to particularize. Influenced by these considerations, my duty to the public, and my affection to the virtuous inhabitants of this State, who, next to the army, would be the most immediate sufferers, have determined me to call upon the respective counties for a proportion of grain and cattle to satisfy the present exigency.

I have adopted this mode of requisition from a regard to the ease and accommodation of the inhabitants. As you are well acquainted with the circumstances of individuals, you will be able to apportion the quantity required to the ability of each; and, as I have no doubt you will be convinced of the absolute necessity of the measure, I am persuaded your zeal for the common cause will induce you to exert your utmost influence to procure a cheerful and immediate compliance. In doing this, though you may not be authorized by the strict letter of the law, by consulting its spirit, which aims at the relief of the army, in an emergency of so pressing and peculiar a nature, you will merit the acknowledgments of your fellow-citizens.

While I have entire confidence, that you will do every thing in your power to give efficacy to this requisition, I have too high an opinion of the patriotism of the people of this State, and of their attachment to an army making every sacrifice in defence of their country, to entertain the least apprehension of their not

seconding your endeavours. But at the same time I think it my duty to inform you, that, should we be disappointed in our hopes, the extremity of the case will compel us to have recourse to a different mode, which will be disagreeable to me on every account, and on none more than the probability of its having an operation less equal and less convenient to the inhabitants, than the one now recommended. I entreat you to be assured, Gentlemen, that I have given you a just representation of our distresses, of the causes, and of the time which must, in all likelihood, elapse before we can obtain relief through the ordinary channels. From this you will be sensible, that delay or indecision is incompatible with our circumstances. With the greatest respect I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL IRVINE.

Morristown, 9 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Our affairs are in so deplorable a condition, on the score of provisions, as to fill the mind with the most anxious and alarming fears. Such a situation, at all times to be lamented, is peculiarly unfortunate at this juncture, when there now is, or soon must be, a field opened for enterprise.

Circumstanced as things are, men half-starved, imperfectly clothed, riotous, and robbing the country people of their subsistence from sheer necessity, I think it scarce possible to embrace any moment, however favorable in other respects, for visiting the enemy on Staten Island; and yet, if this frost should have made a firm and solid bridge between them and us, I should be

unwilling, indeed I cannot relinquish the idea of attempting it.

To you, therefore, I confide the business of ascertaining the state of the ice in the sound, particularly at Halstead's Point, and at the Blazing-Star Ferry; and of obtaining intelligence of the enemy's strength, corps, situation, and works. I need not observe to you how necessary disguise and false pretences are in inquiries of this kind, that the very persons from whom you are obtaining intelligence may be deceived with respect to the design. I know of no better coloring in the present instance, than throwing out the idea of apprehension for the safety of your own detachment. This, or some other false coloring, is necessary, as the persons most likely to give you information do not fail to convey all they know to the enemy. In a word, I have good reason to believe that H. is a double spy. It will be necessary also to know the state of things at Paulus Hook, the condition of the North River, and the practicability of relief going from New York. The circumstances of the army, for the reasons I have already mentioned, and for others that could be urged, render it totally impossible to relieve your detachment at the usual time; and I beg that your utmost attention and exertions may be turned to the business here confided, and that the speediest and fullest communications of the result be given to, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL IRVINE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 12 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Friday evening is determined upon for the execution of the intended enterprise, unless prevented by the in-

tervention of weather or some unforeseen accident. I would, however, wish you to have your detachment in a state of perfect readiness. To avoid giving cause for suspicion by withdrawing your guards totally, I think you had best, to-morrow night, or very early on Friday morning, call in the greater part of them, leaving just sufficient at each post to keep up appearances. That at Elizabethtown, which is most conspicuous, may remain till Friday evening. Lord Stirling will be down with you in the morning, and will finally determine upon the place of passage. This will in a great measure fix the place of rendezvous, which should be as near as circumstances will admit. Colonel Hazen marches this morning with a detachment under his command. He will reach Connecticut Farms to-morrow, and will form a junction with you in due time on Friday. The third detachment will be also ready. I shall send you down one hundred and fifty pairs of shoes, to be delivered out on Friday to those who are in want. Spare musket-cartridges will also be sent down.

You will, in concert with Colonel Ogden, be gaining all the information you can between this and Friday. If the weather continues to thaw, Colonel Ford should, in a careless manner, try the ice once or twice a day. He may judge of the state of it at other places by that at Elizabethtown Point; and desire him to give you notice the moment that a flag arrives from New York. We shall know by that when the communication between the Island and the city is opened. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 13 January, 1780.

My Lord,

Herewith enclosed are your Lordship's discretionary instructions. In addition to what you read in the morning, and in consequence of General Irvine's information respecting the state of the ice between York, Long, and Staten Islands, I have inserted a clause by which you will see, that, if things continue in the condition he represents, I would have your Lordship turn your thoughts to the practicability of compelling a surrender of the enemy, if they should even resort to their forts. I am sorry Colonel Hazen made that march in one day, which was intended for two. To counteract this, would it not be well for General Irvine's detachment to assume an appearance of returning to camp?

The men, who will reinforce you in sleds to-morrow, had better meet at Springfield by your orders, with a careful person to conduct them at once to the place of rendezvous. The detachment will consist of about four hundred men, and may join General Irvine's brigade, if you have nothing better in view for them. You know, I presume, that forty thousand cartridges have been sent to General Irvine for the use of the troops on the expedition. If Colonel Stewart's detachment should be ready earlier than I expect to-morrow, I will direct him to halt at Quibbletown, under pretence of taking in forage there, till a proper hour arrives for him to proceed. I mention this, that you may know how to meet him with orders, in case you have not seen him since yesterday, and fixed your plan with him. In haste, I have the honor to be, &c.*

* The whole number of troops designed to act under Lord Stirling, in a descent upon Staten Island, was about twenty-five hundred.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Morristown, 13 January, 1780.

MY LORD,

I have received yours by Colonel Stewart. Upon your letter and his representation, I shall direct the whole of the detachment, which is to move to-morrow, to proceed directly to join the main body. Should the severity of the weather continue, and your information of the numbers, situation, and circumstances of the enemy make it probable that an attempt upon them openly will succeed, I leave it to your Lordship and the principal officers to carry the matter into execution, in such manner as you shall judge proper. If you determine upon the attack, I do not think you should lose a moment after the troops are assembled, because, in my opinion, our success depends in a great measure upon the weather, which, in its present state, would alone bring men to terms in a short time. I scarce need recommend to your Lordship an attention to the North River. I do not apprehend much danger from that quarter; but we do not know what men may attempt for the relief of so valuable a detachment as that upon Staten Island. I shall direct the artillery to move as early as possible to-morrow. If you make the descent openly, and in the face of the enemy, you may probably have occasion for it. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 14 January, 1780.

MY LORD,

I have directed Lieutenant-Colonel Dehart, with a detachment of two hundred and fifty men, to move

from Paramus to Newark, and send parties of observation from thence to Bergen, to watch the motions of the enemy upon the North River and Paulus Hook. He will communicate with you by way of Elizabethtown, and is directed to receive any commands from you. The detachment will move from hence, as soon as the sleds, which are coming on, are collected.

I have reason to believe, that many of the inhabitants, suspecting that something is in agitation, are preparing to go upon the Island with intent to plunder. Every thing of this kind should be prohibited as far as possible. If any of the militia will embody themselves regularly, put themselves under your command, and share the fatigues of the regular soldiers, I think they should be encouraged in such case, and admitted to an equal share with the Continental troops, of whatever shall be brought off by authority. I have furnished the party that marches this morning, with woollen caps and mittens, and shall send down a parcel for those below.

I think it will be advisable, when you get upon the Island, to let the inhabitants know that such as are found in arms must expect to be treated as enemies, and their effects given up as plunder. I would be understood to hold out this by way of threat, rather than to have it put in execution as to taking their effects. Such as are found in arms must be brought off as prisoners of war. A central position to the three posts on the Island will, without doubt, be thought most eligible by your Lordship, that the garrisons may afford no relief to each other, nor have any communication. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Morristown, seven o'clock, P. M., 14 January, 1780.

MY LORD,

I am this moment favored with your Lordship's letter of this date. The detachment under Colonel Stewart moved off on sleds from the parade about half after two o'clock, and the artillery passed by this place at four this afternoon. I had ordered down five hundred axes, with shovels and picks; of the former, however, I find on inquiry, that only one hundred and eighty were in store, which are all that could be sent; they were directed to Elizabethtown. These, with the provision you have made, I imagine will be sufficient. I have sent to General Knox on the subject of ammunition for the eighteen-pounder, but think it cannot be procured in time. How far the weather may have operated in rendering the passage from the Island to Bergen Point practicable for the march of troops, your Lordship has no doubt determined. Should it be passable, I would beg leave to suggest, that, if the enemy find a part of their force on the Island competent to the size and defence of their works, they might be induced to pass over the rest this way, in order to give the remaining garrison an opportunity of holding out longer on their present stock of fuel and provisions. Your Lordship, knowing how far this is practicable, will take such precautions as it may seem to deserve. Should we be favored in our attempt on Staten Island, it may not be improper to turn your attention to the situation of things at Paulus Hook. With sincere regard, I have the honor to be, &c.*

* A party commanded by Lord Stirling crossed on the ice at Dehart's Point early in the morning of the 15th, and marched towards the enemy's works in the interior of the Island. Their movements had been dis-

TO JOHN WITHERSPOON, IN CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 20 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your favor of the 14th, and your exertions at so trying a juncture for supplies for the army. Indeed all the counties of this State, from which I have heard, have attended to my requisitions for provision with the most cheerful and commendable zeal. What we shall obtain in this manner, in conjunction with the steps taken by Congress, and the States from which we are principally furnished with provisions, will, I flatter myself, secure us from a recurrence of the evil. With regard to your suggestion for making the certificates given on this occasion a tender for the taxes for Continental purposes, I do not consider myself at liberty to propose any particular mode to Congress. I shall, however, as the good people of the State have been so zealous and liberal in relieving our wants, take the freedom to mention the policy of discharging them as early as possible. I shall inquire into the detention of the cattle, and am, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant, &c.

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covered, and the enemy were prepared to receive them; and, contrary to their expectation, a free passage was open by water from the Island to New York. The channel was supposed to have been closed by the ice. A boat had already been despatched by the enemy to carry intelligence and procure reinforcements. The works were so well situated, and appeared so strong, that an assault was deemed unadvisable, since it would probably cost more than could be gained by success. During the day reinforcements arrived, and the next morning Lord Stirling returned to Elizabethtown. There was skirmishing in the retreat, and two or three men were killed on each side. The cold was intense, and the limbs of several of the men were frozen. The Americans took a few prisoners. While the troops were on the Island, a number of persons passed over from the main, and plundered the inhabitants in a most unwarrantable manner. Lord Stirling ordered strict search to be made for all plundered articles, and took measures to have them restored to the owners.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Morristown, 22 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Appearances and facts must speak for themselves. To these I appeal. I have been at my present quarters since the first day of December, and have not a kitchen to cook a dinner in, although the logs have been put together some considerable time by my own guard. Nor is there a place at this moment in which a servant can lodge, with the smallest degree of comfort. Eighteen belonging to my family, and all Mrs. Ford's, are crowded together in her kitchen, and scarce one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught.

I have repeatedly taken notice of this inconveniency to Major Gibbs, and have as often been told, that boards were not to be had. I acquiesced, and believe you will do me the justice to acknowledge, that it never has been my practice to involve the public in any expense which I could possibly avoid, or derive benefits which would be inconvenient or prejudicial to others. To share the common lot, and participate the inconveniences, which the army, from the peculiarity of our circumstances, are obliged to undergo, has with me been a fundamental principle; and, while I conceived this to be the case universally, I was perfectly content. That it is not so, I appeal to your own observation; though I never intended to make the remark, nor should I have done it, but for the question which involuntarily drew from me the answer, which has become the subject of your letter.

Equally opposed is it to my wishes and expectation, that you should be troubled in matters respecting my accommodation, further than to give the necessary or-

ders, and furnish materials, without which orders are nugatory. From what you have said, I am fully satisfied that the persons to whom you entrusted the execution of the business are alone to blame; for certain I am, they might by attention have obtained, equally with others, as many boards as would have answered my purposes long ere this. Far, very far is it from me, to censure any measure you have adopted for your own accommodation, or for the more immediate convenience of Mrs. Greene. At all times I think you are entitled to as good as circumstances will afford, and, in the present condition of your lady, I conceive that no delay could be admitted. I should therefore with great willingness have made my convenience yield to hers, if the point had lain there, being very sincerely, your obedient and affectionate servant, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Morristown, 24 January, 1780.

SIR,

Captain Rochefontaine has represented to me, that, having obtained quarters by regular application to Mr. Lewis, whose certificate is enclosed, he has been in his absence dispossessed by your order in favor of Lieutenant-Colonel Stevens, and no other quarters provided for him. From your letter to the Justice, which I have seen, you appear not to have known the circumstance of Captain Rochefontaine's having been quartered by Mr. Lewis, for you mention that it was without

* It devolved on General Greene, as quartermaster-general, to provide quarters for the Commander-in-chief and other officers. Owing to a deficiency of materials, and the lateness of the season when the army was cantoned for the winter, he had many obstacles to encounter in making the necessary arrangements.

authority; and upon this I presume your order was founded. It is unlucky that things of this nature should happen to any officer, but particularly so to foreign gentlemen, as their situation entitles them to great delicacy of treatment, which I am persuaded is your wish as well as mine. Colonel Stevens's having a family was a reason for requesting Captain Rochefontaine to give up his quarters for others; but it did not require their being taken from him without his concurrence, and no others given in their place. I shall be glad if you will have the affair rectified, and put upon a proper footing. If both parties can be satisfied, it will be best; but, as the matter now stands, Captain Rochefontaine cannot be excluded without his consent.

I have received your letter enclosing one from Mr. Conduit. Major Lee's corps has been in that part of the country for the purpose of preventing the intercourse of which he speaks; but it seems as if it were impracticable to put a stop to it. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL MOSES HAZEN.

Morristown, 25 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have before me your letter of this date. The doubling of the garrison on Staten Island, besides the giving a greater security to the place, may have something further in view. I am informed by Major Thayer, who commands a detachment at Paramus, that the enemy have also doubled their number at Paulus Hook. These circumstances would point to some offensive operation on their part; and I should imagine the forage in the neighbourhood of the Scotch Plains to be a principal object. You will necessarily turn your attention

not only to Staten Island, but to Paulus Hook, and obtain certain intelligence of the situation of things in that quarter. Should the enemy make any attempt, they may operate from both places; and, should the ice be strong enough for troops to cross from New York to Paulus Hook (and it is said to be in this condition), they will be able to augment their force at pleasure, and with the greatest facility. This circumstance is well worth attending to, and will no doubt claim your inquiry and precautions. The relief marches to-day. It will, however, remain with yours till some days after it joins you, or till my further orders on the subject.

I find by Major Thayer's report, that a communication between New York and Hoboken has been opened by the enemy, and that many sleds are daily employed in the transporting of wood. Perhaps this may afford an opportunity to strike some of their covering parties. If any thing in the way you mention can be effected on Staten Island, the militia, if not essential to its success, should not be included, as we have reason to believe that their taking up arms is a matter of compulsion, and more intended for show than service. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

Morristown, 27 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

You will be pleased to repair to our lines and investigate the causes of the late misfortune and disgrace at Elizabethtown, and report your opinion thereupon, as soon as inquiry is made.* You will also examine into

* A detachment of British troops, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Bushkirk, crossed over from Staten Island at Trembley's Point, and entered Elizabethtown between eleven and twelve o'clock in the night of the

the state of our guards, and see if any change can be made in their position for the better; having respect, as far as present circumstances will allow, to the objects in view, which are security to this camp, cover to the country near the enemy's lines, and prevention of that injurious and abominable traffic, which is carried on with the city of New York.

While you are in the discharge of this duty, it is my wish, that you would obtain, in as unsuspected a manner as possible, a perfect knowledge of the enemy's strength, situation, and guards on Staten Island and at Paulus Hook, the state of the ice on the North River, and such other information as it may be beneficial and important for us to be acquainted with. It is my wish, also, that you may obtain a complete knowledge of the places and manner in which the enemy's shipping, flat-boats, and other craft are laid up and secured, thereby discovering whether some successful attempt, by stratagem or otherwise, may not be made to destroy them. The relief, which went down to the detachment under the command of Colonel Hazen, when joined thereto, will form a body of two thousand rank and file; and as there were reasons for apprehending that the enemy had some offensive plan in view, which actually took place that very night, I ordered Colonel Hazen to remain there with his command a few days, or till further orders. You will please to take command of both detachments, and retain the old till the objects here enu-

25th of January. It consisted of one hundred dragoons, and between three and four hundred infantry. They took several prisoners, burnt the meeting-house, town-house, and another building, plundered some of the inhabitants, and retired without loss. A similar attack was made at the same time on a small party at Newark, and with equal success. The academy was burnt. In both places the surprise was complete. The whole number of prisoners taken from the Americans was four officers, and about sixty privates. — *Colonel Hazen's MS. Letter, January 6th.*

merated are fulfilled, unless you should think best to order the return of it to camp before. If in the course of your tour of duty below, and investigation of the enemy's posts, any operation upon a large or small scale presents itself, you will delay no time in communicating your ideas fully on the subject to me, provided in the latter instance a favorable opportunity is not lost by delay, in which case you are left altogether to your own discretion; bearing in mind always, that new disappointments will add discredit to our arms. But, while the state of the ice admits a free and easy passage of troops from New York, any attempt otherwise than by surprise may be dangerous. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL MOSES HAZEN.

Morristown, 27 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favors of yesterday, the last of which did not reach me until this morning. Before the last came to hand, I had given directions to General St. Clair to prepare himself to go down to you, to make inquiry into the situation of matters below, and in conjunction with you to endeavour to find out whether it will be possible to retaliate upon the enemy; and, if not, whether some different position of our guards will not be necessary in future. General St. Clair will not be down before the morning. He will have orders to endeavour to carry into execution any plans, which you may have formed, and which from circumstances may seem feasible; but, from the present strength of the enemy, I do not conceive that any thing upon a large scale can be attempted. Surprises, by small, well conducted parties, seem most likely to promise success. I

have, ever since the North River was passable, conceived the practicability of such a plan as Colonel Willett's. He may be desired to be making inquiries; and, if he finds good reason to believe, that he can make a descent with success, I will cheerfully consent to the trial of the experiment. I imagine the bulk of the enemy's transports are in Newtown Creek upon Long Island, which may be more safe and accessible than Turtle Bay. If Colonel Willett chooses to come up to fix his plan with me, or to pick out any particular men for the purpose, he may be indulged. The men of Webb's regiment, clothed in red, I think well calculated on that account for such an enterprise. I am, &c.*

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY, IN CONGRESS.

Morristown, 29 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your obliging letter of the 12th. I am sorry to find, that Congress had not at that time made any requisitions of men from the States, as it appears to me that the army, without reinforcements, by the expiration of the enlistments of so many men, and of the service of the new levies, as they are called, will be much more reduced than will be compatible with our interest and policy. It was in part from the possibility, that such an idea, as the one you suggest to have obtained with some, might take place, that I was induced to mention, in my letter of the

* Colonel Willett had a project for burning the enemy's transports, which were supposed to be frozen in the ice at Turtle Bay. He intended to effect the enterprise with a small number of resolute men. Colonel Hazen wrote; — "This or any other object, which your Excellency may have in view on York Island, he wishes to undertake;" adding, "He is an active, good officer."

18th of November, the essential difference between an army on paper, and its real efficient force, and to illustrate the point, by contrasting the column of the *present fit for duty* in the return transmitted, with that of the *total*. The hopes indulged, from the beginning of the contest to the present day, from time to time, that a peace would soon take place, have been the source at least of great expense, and they may still prove so and the means of protracting the war. There is nothing so likely to produce peace, as to be well prepared to meet an enemy; and from this persuasion, and the effect you justly observe the contrary on our part might have on the mind of the court of France, and also on that of Spain, I think it would be right for us to hold forth at least every appearance of preparation and vigor, and really to do what our abilities and the circumstances of our finance may well justify. The latter I own is a most important consideration; but I cannot judge how far the state of it may or may not require retrenchments and a spirit of economy, or indeed inactivity in our affairs. You will however perceive, that in a letter to Congress I have again mentioned my opinion of the propriety of placing the army on a more respectable footing, than it will be at the opening of the campaign, without their interposition; and that I have offered the same in my letter to you, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Mathews.

With respect to provision, the situation of the army is comfortable at present on this head, and I ardently pray, that it may never be again as it has been of late. We were reduced to a most painful and delicate extremity; such as rendered the keeping of the troops together a point of great doubt. The exertions of the magistrates and inhabitants of this State were great

and cheerful for our relief. I have had my attention much engaged by a variety of pressing business, and must rely on your indulgence to excuse my not making an earlier acknowledgment of your favor.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard and esteem, &c.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 4 February, 1780.

SIR,

Major Galvan delivered to me the letter, which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me on the 23d of January, and to which I have paid the attention the importance of its contents demands. I am much flattered by this commencement of a correspondence, from which I have every thing to gain; and equally indebted for the interesting communications it affords.

It is a happy circumstance, that the efforts made by the British court for obtaining troops in Germany are attended with so little success. This will naturally increase their exertions for procuring men in this country, and will no doubt make them more solicitous for effecting the exchange or release in some way or other of their prisoners in our hands. It will be well, if, in the negotiations on this subject, we can extract concessions favorable to those, which may take place in Europe, and you may depend the experiment shall be fully tried. But, from the aspect of the late proposition on the part of the enemy, I should not entertain any sanguine hopes of the success of this experiment. The reinforcement they would derive from a full compliance with their proposals is not calculated at more than ten or eleven hundred private men; and this seems hardly to be an object of sufficient magnitude to induce them

to concede to points of the nature, which your Excellency's information supposes; especially, as you emphatically express it, "after having sought with so much affectation to make the thirteen States be considered as subjected to the English domination." The offers made through Major-General Phillips are far more moderate, than any that have hitherto come from them, and appear in a great measure to have been influenced by his personal solicitations, dictated by an extreme anxiety to be released from captivity. But notwithstanding the matter in its present form wears the appearance I have mentioned, I shall not neglect any measure, which it may be in my power to take to improve the intimation your Excellency has given; and I entreat you to be assured, that I shall endeavour to make the event confirm the opinion you do me the honor to entertain, that nothing will be done derogatory to the interest of the United States.*

The inconsistency of the court of London, so well

* M. de la Luzerne had represented in strong language the inexpediency of yielding to any but the most favorable terms in the exchange of prisoners. He had just received intelligence from Europe, that the British had failed in their application to the German courts for additional recruits, and that Sir Henry Clinton had been instructed to use all available means for effecting an exchange of all the prisoners. The Chevalier de la Luzerne took another view of the subject, also, as bearing on the independence and national dignity of the United States. He sent to General Washington an extract from the *Memorial* of the English ambassador in Spain to the court of Madrid, respecting a mediation for a truce with France, dated March 28th, in which the ambassador spoke of the colonies as subject to the English domination. M. de la Luzerne hence enjoined the importance of treating, in regard to the exchange of prisoners, on the footing of perfect equality. "An act of this nature," said he, "may be of the greatest utility to the negotiation of Congress in Europe, when to all the facts, of which the court of Madrid makes mention, may be added a cartel regulated on the basis of a perfect parity, which would be judging beforehand the question of your independence. I congratulate myself, that the negotiation is in your hands; and I am well persuaded that nothing will pass derogatory to the part, which my court has taken

delineated by that of Madrid in the extract you had the goodness to annex, would appear extraordinary, if their whole conduct in the course of the war did not exhibit many similar examples. But it is evident, that their refusing to consider these States as independent, of fact, during a negotiation, was a mere pretext to cover their unwillingness to concur in the pacific views of his Catholic Majesty; and the *Memorial* from the British ambassador shows, that they were artfully aiming to effect a separation of interest between France and these States, the better to prosecute their hostile designs against either or both.*

I thank your Excellency for the agreeable intelligence you gave me, of his Most Christian Majesty's intentions to send over succours of arms and ammunition. It is a new and valuable proof of his friend-

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in acknowledging the independence and the perfect sovereignty of the United States."

* The court of Spain, in an *Exposition of the Motives* of their conduct, relative to England, had used the following language in regard to the state of the controversy between England and the United States.

"Among the propositions of the *ultimatum* of the king of Spain, there is one for which the British cabinet has affected to have the greatest repugnance. It is the proposition, which imports that the colonies shall be treated as independent *of fact*, during the interval of the truce; and it is extraordinary, it is even ridiculous, that the court of London, after having treated the colonies during the war as independent, not only *of fact*, but also *of right*, should have any repugnance to treat with them as independent only *of fact*, during the truce, or suspension of arms. The convention of Saratoga, General Burgoyne considered as a lawful prisoner, the exchange and liberation of colonial prisoners, the nomination of commissioners to go and seek the Americans at their own home, the fact of having asked peace of them and to treat with them or with Congress, and a hundred other facts of this nature authorized by the court of London, have been genuine signs of an acknowledgment of the independence of the Colonies. The English nation itself can best judge and decide, if all these acts are as compatible with the honor of the British crown, as would be that of granting to the Colonies by the interposition of his Catholic Majesty a suspension of arms, to discuss their differences and to treat them during this interval as independent *of fact*."

ship, and will be of essential utility. I agree with you, that there ought to be no relaxation in the measures otherwise intended to be taken to procure the necessary supplies of those articles.

I am sensibly mortified, that the present situation of affairs will by no means suffer me to yield to the desire I have of paying you my respects in Philadelphia; and I shall impatiently look for the opportunity of doing it here, which your Excellency promises me in the course of this month. Besides the important objects of public utility, which I am authorized to hope from it, I shall take pleasure on every occasion of testifying to you those sentiments of respect and esteem, with which I have the honor to be your Excellency's, &c.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

Morristown, 5 February, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received two letters of yours from Weathersfield. I send twenty guineas, and two phials containing the stain and counterpart of the stain for Culper Junior, which I wish may be got to him with as much safety and despatch as the case will conveniently admit. It is my further most earnest wish, that you would press him to open, if possible, a communication with me by a more direct route than the present. His accounts are intelligent, clear, and satisfactory. They consequently might be valuable, but owing to the circuitous route, through which they are transmitted, I can derive no immediate or important advantages from them; and, as I rely upon his intelligence, the only satisfaction that I derive from it is, that other accounts are either confirmed, or corrected by his, after they

have been some time received. I am sensible of the delicacy of his situation and the necessity of caution. For these reasons it is, that I have hitherto forborne, and am still unwilling to mention persons to him as the vehicles of conveyance, lest they should not prove so trustworthy and prudent as we could wish. But if he cannot form the first link of the chain of communication himself, and will let me know it, I believe I can name one or two men to him, who will receive and convey to me, through others, such intelligence as he may think important; but he should avoid making use of the stain upon a blank sheet of paper, which is the usual way of its coming to me. This circumstance alone is sufficient to raise suspicion. A much better way is to write a letter a little in the Tory style, with some mixture of family matters, and, between the lines and on the remaining part of the sheet, to communicate with the stain the intended intelligence. Such a letter would pass through the hands of an enemy unsuspected; and, even if the agents should be unfaithful or negligent, no discovery would be made to his prejudice, as these people are not to know that there is concealed writing in the letter, and the intelligible part of it would be an evidence in his favor.

You will be so good as to communicate these several matters to him in a full and clear manner, and inform me of the result. The choice of a proper name or character to address his letters to, if they come through the channel I have recommended, is a matter worthy of consideration. I have written to General Poor to furnish a man, as you desire, and have him sent to Lieutenant Brewster at Fairfield. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL ARMAND.

Morristown, 6 February, 1780.

SIR,

Enclosed you will find a letter to the Board of War, recommending the incorporating of your corps with the late Pulaski's, including the troop commanded by Captain Bedkin. I do not unite the *Maréchaussée*, because that corps is destined for a particular service, to which it will be altogether applied in the course of the next campaign, nor should I think it advisable to convert it to any other purpose.* The infantry with Selin is now necessarily employed on the frontier, and cannot at this time be conveniently relieved. Besides, the circumstances under which that corps was formerly separated from yours make me unwilling to recommend a reunion. I have advised the Board to give you orders for assembling your whole corps in Georgia, and to make the necessary arrangements without delay for enabling you to march thither. I have read the letter from the Board of War to you on the subject of Monsieur du Plantier. It is not possible for me to give efficacy in our service to his commission in that of France, or to oblige your officers to submit to his command; but so

* The *Maréchaussée* corps was a company of cavalry, whose duties appertained chiefly to the police of the army. In an encampment it was the business of this corps to patrol the camp and its environs, for the purpose of apprehending deserters, marauders, rioters, stragglers, and all other soldiers, who should be found violating general orders. Strangers, and persons discovered near the pickets without passes, were to be taken up and brought into camp. The sutlers of the camp were under the supervision of the commander of the same corps. During a march, the Maréchaussée troops patrolled the rear and flanks of the columns, and brought in all stragglers; and they saw that the orders were properly executed in the transportation of baggage. In the time of action they were to patrol the roads on the right and left of the army, and rally and collect fugitives. The Maréchaussée company was under the immediate command of the adjutant-general.

far as the views of the Board can be accommodated by you to the officers of your corps, it will give me the greatest pleasure to see Monsieur du Plantier furnished with the opportunity he desires of being useful. This however must be absolutely an affair of accommodation, not of authority.

The enclosed certificate will show the sense I entertain of your services, and I hope will be satisfactory to you. As you will probably be removed from my immediate command, I take this occasion of repeating to you the assurances of my esteem. You may depend, that I shall always be happy to hear of your success, and that circumstances have seconded your zeal and your talents. I am, &c.

Certificate.

I certify, that the Marquis de la Rouerie* has served in the army of the United States since the beginning of 1777, with the rank of colonel, during which time he has commanded an independent corps with much honor to himself and usefulness to the service. He has upon all occasions conducted himself as an officer of distinguished merit, of great zeal, activity, vigilance, intelligence, and bravery. In the last campaign, particularly, he rendered very valuable services, and towards the close of it made a brilliant partisan stroke, by which, with much enterprise and address, he surprised a major and some men of the enemy in quarters, at a considerable distance within their pickets, and brought them off without loss to his party. I give him this certificate in testimony of my perfect approbation of his conduct and esteem for himself personally.

* Colonel Armand's title in France.

TO BARON STEUBEN, AT PHILADELPHIA.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 8 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have received your letter, with the papers annexed, and have carefully considered the contents, on which I shall give you my sentiments with freedom and confidence. The principal point, on which your memorial to Congress turns, is the force requisite for the next campaign. To determine this on good grounds, we ought first to settle the following question; Will it be in our power to make an offensive, or must we content ourselves with a defensive campaign?

It is not possible to decide this question without a more intimate knowledge of our resources of finance, than I at present possess, and without ascertaining whether our allies can afford a squadron for an effectual coöperation on this continent. I think with vigorous exertions we may raise a sufficient number of men for offensive operations, if we were able to maintain them; but, from the view I have of our affairs, I do not believe the state of our treasury will admit this without assistance from abroad. Whether this is to be obtained, Congress alone can judge. On the other hand, from the particular situation of the enemy's posts in this quarter, I should not advise you to calculate measures on the principle of expelling them, unless we had certain assurances that an adequate naval force will be ready to coöperate with us through all contingencies. If a foreign aid of money and a fleet are to be depended upon, I should then recommend that all our dispositions should have reference to an offensive and decisive campaign; and in this case I should ask at least one third more men than you estimate, to be immediately raised by a general draft.

But, as I doubt whether these two preliminaries can be placed upon such a footing of certainty, as to justify our acting in consequence, I imagine we must of necessity adopt the principle of a defensive campaign, and pursue a system of the most absolute economy. On this principle, however, if I understand your estimate, I do not think it will be more than sufficient. When the deductions for unavoidable casualties are made, this number will give us less than twenty thousand for our efficient operating force. This is as little as we can well have to contain the enemy within bounds, and prevent their making any further progress. Including the detachment which lately sailed from New York, they have near twenty thousand men fit for actual service in these states; to say nothing of the recruits they will probably send over to complete their battalions, which will be an augmentation of force. For these reasons I approve the estimate you have proposed, as best suited to our present circumstances.

The number of cavalry you propose is in good proportion, and in a military sense necessary. Cavalry, if there is an active scene to the southward, will be particularly useful there; but the question of expense is a very serious one, and, like the rest, must be referred to those who are acquainted with our *money* resources. Another point is, whether the regiments had better be incorporated with each other and completed to such a standard as will give the number of men required. A committee of Congress, as you have been informed, sent me a proposal, which has been referred to their consideration, for reducing the number of battalions, and asked my opinion upon it. Though I was fully sensible of the inconveniences, which will infallibly attend a reduction, I did not dissuade from it, principally on two accounts; one, a conviction that the

embarrassments in our finances require every expedient for saving expense; the other, the incompetency of the present number of officers to the present number of corps. But though I do not disapprove, I am far from being much attached to this plan. Congress can best balance the advantages and disadvantages, and determine which preponderate.

I sincerely wish that what you recommend with respect to magazines could be carried into execution, but I fear it will be impracticable in the present extent. Every thing, however, that is possible ought to be attempted. There is no danger of the magazines exceeding our wants; and we have been under dreadful embarrassments, through the whole course of the war, from temporary and precarious supplies. The arms ought, at all events, to be provided. I have issued an order, requiring the returns demanded by the Board of War to be made out with all despatch. They will be forwarded as fast as they are collected. There are some points of inferior importance in your memorial, which I approve, that do not require a particular enumeration. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

Morristown, 15 February, 1780.

Sir,

I am much indebted to your Excellency for announcing my election as a member of the Philosophical Society. I feel myself particularly honored by this relation to a society, whose successful efforts for promoting useful knowledge have already justly acquired for them the highest reputation in the literary world. I entreat you to present my warmest acknowledgments,

and to assure them, that I shall with zeal embrace every opportunity of seconding their laudable views, and manifesting the exalted sense I have of the institution. The arts and sciences essential to the prosperity of the State, and to the ornament and happiness of human life, have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his country and of mankind. With the greatest respect and esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 16 February, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

From the frequency of fires at West Point and its dependencies, one would think there was something more than accident, and yet from the inquiry they do not appear to be the effect of design. It is possible that there may be fire-engines in some of the towns up the river, one of which you might perhaps obtain upon application. The posts at the Highlands are of so much consequence to the people of the State of New York, that I am convinced they will readily afford every assistance towards the safety and security of the works.

I am pleased to find, that the State of Massachusetts has, upon reconsideration, given to Major Hull his rank; and I hope, that, as they are now fully possessed of the principles of rank, and of the consequences which would ensue from a deviation from them, they will not in future make any promotions out of the regular line. The affair at White Plains is a very unlucky one, and our loss, considering the strength of the detachment, very considerable. It is some consolation, that our officers and men appear to have made a brave

resistance. I cannot help suspecting that our officers in advance quarter too long in a place. By these means the enemy, by their emissaries, gain a perfect knowledge of their cantonments, and form their attacks accordingly. Were they to shift constantly, the enemy could scarcely ever attain this knowledge.* A short continuance of the present weather will break up the ice, or render it impassable, either of which will put you in a better state as to security. I am, &c.

TO BARON STEUBEN.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 18 February, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I had received the resolve of Congress, of which you enclosed to me a copy, immediately from the President, and in consequence of it instantly gave the necessary directions for the proper returns to be brought in, to enable me to furnish the States with an account of the deficiencies of their quotas of troops. This, from the dispersed state of several of the independent corps, the artillery, the cavalry, and artificers, will take up a considerable time; and it is very much to be feared that the greater part, if not the whole of the time allowed for bringing the levies into the field, will elapse before the returns can be collected, digested, and transmitted to

* Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson was posted near White Plains, with a detachment consisting of five companies. On the morning of the 3d of February this party was attacked by sixty Yagers, forty refugee light-horse, and between four and five hundred infantry. The Americans made a brave resistance, and for a quarter of an hour the action was warm and well sustained, but at last Colonel Thompson was compelled to surrender. His whole loss was fourteen killed, seventeen wounded, seven officers and ninety non-commissioned officers and privates prisoners. — *General Heath's Letter, February 10th.*

the remote States. The returns lately called for by the Board of War are preparing, and those belonging to the army at this cantonment will be forwarded in a day or two; those from the detachments of the army at West Point, Danbury, and the horse in Connecticut, as soon as possible.

My personal regard for M. Gerard and Mr. Jay, and the passengers on board the Confederacy, made me extremely regret the disaster which befell that ship; but the disappointment in our public stores, which may be the consequence of M. Gerard's delay, is a matter of very serious import. We will, however, hope that we shall be able to find arms for the levies as they come in.* I shall impatiently expect the pleasure of the Chevalier de la Luzerne's visit; and I am not without hopes, that he will, by the time he can be ready to set out, have received such intelligence from Europe, as will enable him to judge with more precision of the prospects of the next campaign. I am, Sir, with very great esteem, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Head-Quarters, 19 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have just received a letter from Mr. Symmes, one of the Supreme Judges of this State, transmitting to me a copy of a letter of the 14th instant to the honorable House of Assembly, on the subject of complaints made

* The *Confederacy*, in which Mr. Jay and M. Gerard sailed together for Europe, was so much disabled by a gale of wind on the Banks of Newfoundland, that the captain was obliged to bear away to the Island of Martinique for repairs. Mr. Jay wrote a full account of all the particulars in a letter to the President of Congress. — *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, Vol. VII. p. 174.

to him by soldiers in the Continental army, of their being detained in service beyond the period for which they were engaged, and recommending the speedy direction and inquiry of the legislature into the matter.

I doubt not Mr. Symmes took this step from commendable motives; but I think it my duty to apprize your Excellency, that a compliance with his recommendation could not fail to be attended with the most pernicious consequences. The true source of the discontents he speaks of is a dissimilarity in the terms of enlistments for the army. Those soldiers, who are truly engaged for the war, are dissatisfied at seeing others, many of whom have received equal, some greater emoluments, returning home, and having it in their power to obtain new bounties and new encouragements for their services, while they, held to their original engagements, are deprived of these privileges. They, therefore, frequently deny their being enlisted for the war, and make a variety of pretences to extricate themselves. Frequent applications have been made to me, and inquiries have taken place in consequence; but in almost every instance it has been found, that either the complaints have been entirely groundless, or too weakly supported to justify the discharge of the men. The cases most in their favor, which sometimes occur, are these. The original enlistments having been lost, officers resigning or dismissed from the service have given certificates of their being engaged for limited periods; but where these certificates are found to clash with the constant returns and muster-rolls of the regiment, which are certainly much more authentic criterions, they are disregarded. The circumstances mentioned by Mr. Symmes, of officers, on their resignation or discharge, turning over their men on oath to the succeeding officers, is founded on misin-

formation, for no such custom prevails in the army. The evil proceeds in a great measure from the reverse of this cause, the one I have mentioned above. It is probable enough, from the difficulty of ascertaining the fact in particular cases, that some men may be injured. But I verily believe the instances are rare, and that in general all possible justice is done to the men in this respect. I am at least conscious, that I have uniformly cultivated this spirit in the officers, and discountenanced the contrary.

I shall give your Excellency an example, which will serve to confirm the representation I have made. The Pennsylvania soldiers, from the commencement, were almost universally engaged for the war. When they saw the eastern levies, in the beginning of last campaign, who had received enormous bounties, many a thousand pounds and upwards,* for a few months, they began to compare situations, to murmur, and to dispute their engagements. To remove these discontents, Congress, at my instance, were pleased to order a gratuity of one hundred dollars to all men enlisted for the war, previous to the 23d of January, 1779. The intention of this gratuity was clearly explained. The men received it, and gave receipts expressive of that intention. They begin now to revive their former dissatisfaction, and many desertions have taken place in consequence; so unreasonable are they, or rather so fatal is the influence of that system of short enlistments, which in the first period of the war laid the foundation of all our subsequent misfortunes.

From this view of the subject I flatter myself, that you will readily perceive the inexpediency of the State interposing in the affair. Such countenance to the

* This is to be understood of the paper currency, at its depreciated value.

disposition now prevailing would soon make it epidemical. New pretenders would immediately start up in every line; new expectations, hopes, and reasonings would be excited, the discontent would become general, and our military system would be nearly unhinged. Instead of gratifying the ill humor of the men, by a mark of extraordinary attention, decisive measures to suppress it will, in my opinion, be most consistent with justice to the public and sound policy. I confine my remarks to the inexpediency of an interference by the legislature of this State. Your Excellency's discernment will suggest other considerations, which are of so delicate a nature, that I shall decline particularizing them. I shall only add, that I have the fullest confidence the legislature will act with perfect wisdom and propriety upon the occasion, and that I have the honor to be with the highest respect, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MARINUS WILLETT.

Morristown, 22 February, 1780.

SIR,

Secrecy in the business you have been requested to put in train is so essentially necessary, that those who are willing to embark in it may rest assured, that not even a whisper shall be heard from hence. It is to be presumed, that every circumspection and caution, which the case will admit of, will be used to prevent a discovery of any of the agents. But if, notwithstanding, the one at Secaucus should be suspected and prosecuted, I must in behalf of the public stand between him and the consequences of a prosecution. It may not, however, be amiss to observe, by way of caution, that the great pursuit of those, who, heretofore

have been employed in this business, is traffic; and, this being carried on with avidity, the end for which they were engaged was defeated, because suspicions on our part, and a desire of rendering themselves useful to the enemy, that they might accomplish with more ease their own lucrative plans, gave a turn to the business which operated much to our prejudice.

I do not know how easy it may be for the agent at Secaucus to obtain free access to the intelligencer at New York; but it is absolutely necessary he should. It is the hinge on which the whole turns, and without it nothing can be done to effect. Hence is it not necessary to have a person on the North River, at or near Bergen, who can at all times have equal access to the city and Secaucus unsuspected? Is it not necessary, also, to have some person between Second River and head-quarters? These matters you will consider and determine. I need not add, that the fewer hands a business of this sort is in, the better it will be executed, and the less risk there is of a discovery. Verbal accounts, in passing through several hands, and some heads which may not be very clear, are liable to such transmutations as serve to confound and perplex rather than inform. For this reason the agent in New York should give all his intelligence in writing, which may be done fully and with security (even if the letters should fall into the hands of the enemy) in the manner I shall hereafter communicate. His letters may be addressed to the agent at Second River, or any other more proper person, if one can be thought of. But whether he will write in his own name, or under an assumed one, must be left to himself to determine, when he comes to understand the mode for communicating the intelligence

The persons intermediate between him and me, serving as mere vehicles of conveyance, will know

nothing of the contents; consequently the avenues leading to a discovery of the person in New York, who should be shielded on all sides, will be much lessened and guarded. The compensation for these services had better be fixed beforehand, because loose agreements are seldom rewarded to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. I shall be glad to see you tomorrow morning, that I may have some further conversation with you on this subject. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN, IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 27 February, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am extremely happy to find, both for the public and for your sake, that your prospects were less gloomy when you wrote your two last letters, than when you wrote the first. I hope you have had the time necessary to complete your defences on the land side, and will be able effectually to baffle every attempt of the enemy in your quarter. Hitherto our affairs to the southward have certainly been more prosperous than could have been expected from circumstances, and, if the issue is not favorable, I am thoroughly persuaded it will not be your fault. The succession of tempestuous weather, which immediately followed the departure of the fleet that sailed from New York the latter end of December, we have been flattering ourselves, will at least retard and disconcert their southern operation. We have yet had no distinct account of them; it will be fortunate indeed if they have been driven off and dispersed.

In addition to the advices you were obliging enough to communicate, I have just seen official accounts, from

the governor of Havana, of the success of the Spaniards in the Floridas. If the remaining posts fall, it will be a very important stroke, and in all probability the operations there will have a favorable influence upon our affairs in your quarter. Though perhaps it may not be probable, it is not impossible, that the British general, if he has discretionary power, on hearing of the progress of the Spaniards in the Floridas, may suspend his original plan and turn his attention that way, and endeavour to defend their own territories rather than attempt conquests. Don Juan de Miralles, the Spanish agent, in a letter communicating the foregoing intelligence, has the following paragraph; "By royal order, I am very strongly charged to influence your Excellency to make the greatest diversion with the troops of the United States against those of the enemy in Georgia, to the effect of attracting their attention and disabling them from sending succours to Pensacola and Mobile, which the governor of Louisiana is to attack, aided with sea and land forces, which were prepared at Havana with all things needful, and ready to sail when the season would permit." This I transmit to you for your government, satisfied that you will do every thing to effect the diversion desired, which the situation of your force and that of the enemy, combined with other circumstances, will allow. If they act offensively against the Carolinas, your whole attention will necessarily be engaged at home; but, if they should direct their force elsewhere, you may possibly have it in your power to pursue measures favorable to the operations of the Spaniards, and to the immediate interests of the United States.

You will long since have been informed, that your intelligence with respect to the Virginia troops being detached to the southward was good. Though they

could be ill spared from this army, I thought we should have less to fear here, than you there, without them; and it appeared upon the whole advisable to throw the weight of Virginia into the defence of our southern extremity. I should have given you earlier notice of it, but I relied upon its being done by Congress. With the most affectionate regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO DON JUAN DE MIRALLES.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 27 February, 1780.

SIR,

I have the honor of your letter of the 18th instant, enclosing an extract of one from the Governor of Havana. I am happy in the opportunity of congratulating you on the important success it announces to the arms of his Catholic Majesty,* which I hope is a prelude to others more decisive. These events will not only advance the immediate interest of his Majesty, and promote the common cause, but they will probably have a beneficial influence on the affairs of the southern States at the present juncture.

The want of any certain intelligence of the fleet, which sailed from New York, I should attribute to their having been disconcerted in their voyage by the tempestuous weather, which prevailed for some time after their departure. A variety of circumstances combining proved, that the intention of that embarkation was for the southern States. All my intelligence agreed in this point. The composition of the detachment; Gov-

* The capture of the British forts at Baton Rouge and Natchez, by a party of Spaniards under General Galvez, Governor of Louisiana. Five hundred and fifty prisoners were taken, besides military stores and other property. The garrisons capitulated.

ernor Martin and several refugees from South and North Carolina having embarked in the fleet; the current of the English accounts, by which it appears that General Clinton was expected to be in South Carolina as early as November, in which he was probably prevented by Count d'Estaing's operations in Georgia; these circumstances conspire to satisfy me, that the Carolinas were the objects. But, notwithstanding this, I think the precautions you are taking to put the Spanish dominions upon their guard are wise. It can have no ill consequence; and it is advisable to be provided against all contingencies. It would not be surprising if the British general, on hearing of the progress of the Spanish arms in the Floridas, should relinquish his first design, and go to the defence of their own territories.

I shall with the greatest pleasure comply with your request for giving you information of all the movements of the enemy, that come to my knowledge, which may in any manner interest the plans of your court; and I have written to General Lincoln agreeably to your intimation. Every motive will induce him to do whatever may be in his power to effect the diversion desired. If the enemy prosecute the plan, which I suppose to have been originally intended, he will necessarily find his whole attention employed at home on the defensive; but, if they direct their force to another quarter, I am persuaded he will make the best use of his to give them all possible annoyance and distraction.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

* Respecting the Spanish agent, Don Juan Miralles, it was uncertain how far he acted under the immediate authority of the Spanish government. A letter from Luzerne to Vergennes throws some light on the subject. Luzerne wrote, that Miralles confessed to him, that he had no instructions directly from the court of Spain; that his correspondence

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Morristown, 5 March, 1780.

My Lord,

I have read the orders, which you had framed for your division. They are certainly good; but in substance, except in a very few instances, are very explicitly enjoined by the regulations, and have been reiterated at different periods in the general orders, antecedent to the promulgation of the established "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops," and since in many particular ones by a reference to them; as your Lordship may perceive by recurring to the Orderly Book. At our last interview I slightly touched on this subject; but I shall embrace the present occasion to repeat more fully, that orders, unless they are followed by close attention to the performance of them, are of little avail. They are read by some, only heard of by others, and inaccurately attended to by all, whilst by a few they are totally disregarded; and this will for ever be the case, till the principal officers of the army begin the work of reformation by a close inspection into the police, and the conduct of the officers and men under their respective commands, and will endeavour to restore public economy and saving, than which nothing can better suit our present circumstances.

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was with the Governor of Havana; that the Spanish ministry had signified their general approbation of his conduct down to the end of August last; that he had received a letter from M. Galvez stating that he would be appointed minister to the United States when the king should think proper to send one. Congress showed every mark of respect to this agent, which was due to his personal character, but carefully avoided treating with him in any public capacity, except through the intervention of the French minister. Congress would not commit themselves by treating with a person, who was not empowered directly by the Spanish court. — *MS. Letter from Luzerne to Vergennes, March 13th.*

Example, whether it be good or bad, has a powerful influence, and the higher in rank the officer is, who sets it, the more striking it is. Hence, and from all military experience, it has been found necessary for officers of every denomination to inspect narrowly the conduct of such parts of the army and corps, as are committed to their care. Without this, the "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops," established by the highest authority, and which are short, simple, and easy in the performance, and the general orders, will be little attended to; of course neglect of discipline, want of order, irregularity, waste, abuse, and embezzlement of public property, insensibly creep in. It is idle to suppose, under a description like this, the ground of which none I believe will deny, that a division, brigade, or regimental order, will have greater weight than those of Congress, or of the general; but, if the persons issuing them would devote, as duty indispensably requires, a reasonable portion of their time to a personal and close inspection into the affairs of their respective commands; if they would frequently parade their regiments, and compare the actual strength of them, their arms, accoutrements, and clothes, with the returns, and have the deficiencies, if any there be, satisfactorily accounted for and provided, agreeably to the establishment of the army; if they would see that the regulations, the general orders, and their own, were carried into execution, where practicable, or report the causes of failure when that cannot be done; that all returns are made in due form, in proper time and correctly, comparing one return with another, in order to prevent mistakes, correct abuses, and do justice to the public; and that, in visiting such parts of the line, and such particular corps, as are entrusted to their care, praise is bestowed on the deserving, rep-

rehension, and, where necessary, punishment on the negligent; the good effects would be almost instantaneously felt. Frequent visits and inspection into matters of this kind would produce more real good in one month, than volumes of the best digested orders, that the wit of man can devise, would accomplish in seven years.

Were it not for the infinity of perplexing business, that is referred to and comes before me from every quarter; the multiplicity of letters and papers I have to read and consider, many of which originate in the want of application and due attention being given by the general officers to their respective commands, which brings a variety of applications to head-quarters, that ought to be settled in the respective lines, I should devote much more of my time to the military parts of my duty. Unhappily, while necessity holds me from these attentions, a want of being sufficiently impressed with its importance, or some other cause, operates with equal force on others; and the few rides I am able to make to the camp, and the hours which I can devote to the business of the line, never fail to produce mortifying proofs of inattention and relaxation of discipline. The country, in all my excursions, I find spread over with soldiers, notwithstanding the pointed orders which have been issued to restrain them, and to discountenance a practice, which has been found pregnant with desertion, robbery, and even murders, and totally repugnant to every principle of discipline and the rules laid down for our government.

This, my Lord, is a free and friendly representation of facts. Your letter drew it from me to you at this time; but I shall take occasion, as soon as the general officers assemble, to require in explicit terms from them a conduct comformable to these sentiments in

future; for without it there is no possibility in the present perplexity of affairs, and the divided attention I am obliged to give to the numberless objects, which press upon me, to move the military machine with any degree of propriety. With much esteem and regard, I am your Lordship's, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 7 March, 1780.

SIR,

I thank you for the communication you have been pleased to give me, with respect to the fleet and embarkation at Havana, and I am in hopes we shall hear of the Spaniards having made a successful stroke against one or both of the places you have mentioned. As to the enemy's fleet supposed to be bound to the southward, from the violent and constant storms that prevailed for several days after their departure from New York, I still think they must have been a good deal deranged and injured.

With respect to Captain Greene and the other hostages given at the Cedars, it cannot be in my power to do more than to endeavour to effect their exchange. This will be attempted, as it constantly has been; but it will rest with the enemy to consent to it or not, as they may think proper. Hitherto the latter has been their choice; and, if they persevere in it, the hostages I should suppose must be bound by their engagements. It seems to me, that this must be the case in every instance of parole, and in the present the engagements appear to be obligatory upon the officers in a very peculiar manner, as the indulgence of parole was granted after the treaty was set aside, for the

performance of which they had been given as a security.*

It is very sincerely to be wished, that the States may furnish the several articles of supplies required of them. It will be very interesting for them to do it, and in such a manner, that the army may not either be reduced to a situation of want, or our operations cramped or prohibited by an apprehension of it. I shall take the earliest occasion, after it is in my power, to inform the respective States of the places that appear to me the most proper for supplies to be deposited at. It will be necessary to consult the quartermaster-general and commissary-general upon the subject, the latter of whom is now absent from camp on business at the eastward.† I have the honor to be, &c.

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* Captain Greene was one of the prisoners taken at the Cedars in May, 1776, and one of the hostages given up to the enemy in consequence of the convention between General Arnold and Captain Forster. The hostages were sent to New York, and on the 1st of January, 1777, Captain Greene was set at liberty on his parole. By a recent order from the British commander, he was required, according to the terms of his parole, to return to New York. Under these circumstances Captain Greene petitioned Congress for relief. The petition was referred to the Commander-in-chief, who was authorized and directed to take such measures in regard to the hostages as he should judge expedient. — *Journals, February 19th.*

† Such were the financial embarrassments of Congress, and the depreciation of the Continental currency, that a new plan was adopted for procuring supplies for the army. Specific quantities of flour, meat, and other articles, were apportioned to each State. These were to be collected, deposited, and delivered at such places within the States respectively, as the Commander-in-chief should designate. The scheme proved very defective in practice, as no times were specified for depositing the articles, and there was no penalty for neglect. Moreover, some of the States were so far from the operations of the army, that the cost of transportation was greater than the entire value of the articles in the vicinity of the army.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR, AND LIEUTENANT-COLONELS EDWARD CARRINGTON AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Morristown, 8 March, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

The powers herewith authorize you to proceed to Amboy on the 9th instant, to meet commissioners on the part of the enemy, for the purpose of settling a general cartel. You will perceive what has been already done in this business by the papers accompanying this. The only instructions I have to give you are these, that you transact nothing under your commission but upon principles of perfect equality and on a national ground. If the enemy will not treat with you on this footing, you will put an end to the negotiation. But after your official business is over, I wish you in private conversation to enter into a discussion of the proposals, so as to remove any difficulties they contain, and prepare the way for some future particular agreement, which may give relief to our officers and men in captivity.

If you enter into a general cartel, you must of necessity include the southern prisoners; but, if you are obliged to confine yourselves to what I now recommend, you will avoid including them. The proposals appear to me generally liberal, though in some respects exceptionable. The tariff, however, is moderate enough. Having entire confidence in your judgment and discretion, I think it unnecessary to enter into a detail of the exceptionable parts; persuaded that they will readily occur to you, and that you will take proper steps to have them amended. The settlement of accounts is a point of importance and difficulty. As the matter now stands, I am unable to give you any explicit directions on the subject. If you are likely to enter into a gen-

eral cartel, you will immediately advise me, and I will obtain further instructions from Congress. If this is not the case, you will hardly be able to draw any engagements from the enemy on this head, and you will perceive this point is not to be made a preliminary nor ultimatum. You will do the best you can, endeavouring by all means to engage the British commissioners to advance a sufficient sum of money to pay the debts of our officers for board and the like, and enable them to leave their captivity. You will communicate to me from time to time any matters you may desire my advice upon, and it shall cheerfully be afforded. I sincerely wish you a successful and honorable issue to your commission.

TO THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 15 March, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

General Arnold has informed me, that your honorable Board had requested him to communicate to me, that they had in contemplation an expedition with several of our frigates, and wished to know whether three or four hundred men could be spared from the army to act in conjunction with them, and as marines occasionally for about two months. He also informed me, that he had offered to command the expedition, if it should be agreeable to me.

With respect to the troops, I beg leave to acquaint the Board, that, from the detachments lately sent to the southward and the great diminution of our force besides, occasioned by the daily expiration of the men's enlistments, it appears to me that none can be spared from the army, consistently with prudence or policy.

But, should the Board finally determine on the proposed enterprise, and the troops be essential to its success, I would farther beg leave to observe, that, under the circumstances of the army which I have stated, I should not think myself authorized to send them, without the concurrence and direction of Congress. And as to the second point, General Arnold's offer to command the expedition, the matter will depend entirely on Congress, the Board, and himself. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 18 March, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Your polite and obliging letter of the 10th of October from Havre came to my hands since the beginning of this month. It filled me with a pleasure intermixed with pain. To hear that you were well, to find you breathing the same affectionate sentiments that ever have most conspicuously marked your conduct towards me, and that you continued to deliver them with unabated attachment, contributes greatly to my happiness. On the other hand, to hear that not one of the many letters, which I have written to you since you left this continent, had arrived safely, was not only surprising but mortifying, although you have the goodness to account for it on its true principles. It is my earnest wish to convince you, by every testimony that an affectionate regard can dictate, of my sincere attachment to your person and fortunes.

For the copy of your letter to Congress, and the several pieces of intelligence, which you did me the favor to transmit, you will be pleased to accept my

warmest thanks. Our eyes are now turned to Europe. The manœuvres of the field, long ere this, must have yielded to those of the cabinet; and I hope Great Britain will be as much foiled in her management of the latter, as she has been in the former. Her having formed no alliances, and having been unable to contract for more foreign troops, exhibit interesting proofs of it, which are not a little strengthened by the dispositions of the people of Ireland, who feel the importance of a critical moment to shake off those badges of slavery, which they have so long worn.

Since my last, a detachment, if it can be called a detachment where the commander-in-chief of an army is, consisting of the grenadiers and light infantry, and some other chosen corps, amounting in the whole to between five and six thousand men, embarked for Georgia. On the 26th of December they left Sandy Hook, under convoy of five ships of the line, and several frigates, commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot. General Clinton and Lord Cornwallis went with them. We have accounts, that part of this fleet had arrived at Savannah, and that it suffered very considerably in the stormy weather after their sailing, in which there is good reason to believe that most of their horses were thrown overboard, and that some of their ships foundered. Indeed, we are not without reports, that many of the transports were driven to the West Indies. How far these accounts are to be credited I shall not undertake to determine; but certain it is, the fleet has been much dispersed, and their operations considerably delayed, if not deranged, by the tempestuous weather they had to encounter during the whole month of January. The enemy, that they might bend their operations more forcibly to the southward, and at the same time leave New York and its dependencies suffi-

ciently garrisoned, have withdrawn their troops from Rhode Island.

As the enemy's intentions of operating in the southern States were unfolded, I began to detach troops to their aid; accordingly in November the North Carolina brigade took up its march for Charleston, and was followed about the middle of December by the troops of Virginia. But the extreme cold, the deep snows, and other impediments, have retarded the progress of their march very considerably. The oldest people now living in this country do not remember so hard a winter as the one we are now emerging from. In a word, the severity of the frost exceeded any thing of the kind that had ever been experienced in this climate before. I beg leave to make a tender of my best respects to Madame de Lafayette, and to offer fresh assurances of being with sentiments of great and sincere friendship, my dear Marquis, your most obedient, &c.*

TO BARON DE KALB.†

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 21 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of yesterday, enclosing a letter for General Greene, which I shall not deliver to him, as I know he has not at present the means of building the boats you mention. I would therefore recommend to you to put out the best of those, which

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* Although Lafayette was in France when this letter was written, yet he did not receive it there, as he sailed for the United States before the end of March.

† Baron de Kalb now commanded on the lines at Elizabethtown and Amboy, having succeeded General St. Clair, who had obtained permission for a short absence from the army.

you may find in the several rivers, for the purpose of guard-boats. Upon referring to and reconsidering your former letter upon this subject, I am of opinion that the stations, which you then pointed out, will be dangerous, so far as they respect the distance between Elizabethtown and Amboy; the Sound there being so exceedingly narrow, that a boat pushed suddenly from the opposite shore in the night would more than probably take ours. Besides, I do not think we are to look for a descent in any considerable force from that quarter. The enemy have generally hitherto embarked either at Long Island, or upon the further side of Staten Island, and have come through the Kills and across Newark Bay, thereby avoiding all discovery from this shore, which they would be subject to anywhere between Elizabethtown and Amboy. Newark Bay is, therefore, in my opinion, the proper and the safe place for your guard-boats to ply. It is of considerable extent, and a fleet of boats may be discovered either by their working or by sight some time before their approach.

We have found on repeated experiments, that the inhabitants will not remove their stock until the moment of danger; indeed at this season they have no places to send them where they can be supplied with food. I would therefore have you give as general information as in your power, that an incursion of the enemy may be expected, and recommend to the people to drive back their stock upon the first communication of an alarm. I do not think it probable, that the enemy will put their designs, if they have any, into execution while our Commissioners are sitting at Amboy. I mention this as a matter of opinion only, and would not wish you to relax your vigilance on that account. You will, no doubt, have the signals in the utmost state of

preparation, and keep a small party stationed with the alarm-guns below Chatham. I am, &c.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER, IN CONGRESS.

Morristown, 22 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Our affairs seem to be verging so fast to a stagnation in every branch, even provisions, that I have not only consented, but advised General Greene, as I shall do the commissary when he arrives, to repair to Philadelphia, and endeavour to know with precision what is to be depended on in their respective departments. The new system adopted by Congress for conducting the business of these departments may have originated from two causes, necessity and choice; the first, from inability for want of money to proceed any further in the old track; the second, from a desire to change the old system on account of the commission, it being thought, and I fear with too much reason, exceedingly expensive and disgustful to the people at large. Under these ideas and impressions I am embarrassed, and cautious of saying any thing on the subject, further than to give it as my opinion, that, whatever system is adopted, it should be made as perfect as the nature of the thing will admit. That this is not the case in many instances with the present one is obvious, as must appear to you upon a comparative view of the plan, movements, and wants of an army. In some instances, if literally adhered to, ruin must follow. I will embrace the first moment I have to write to you more fully. In the mean time, I pray you to be assured, that I am, with every sentiment of the most perfect esteem and regard, dear Sir, your affectionate, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Morristown, 22 March, 1780.

My Lord,

Enclosed you will find an extract from a letter, which I received yesterday from Governor Livingston, with twelve copies of the act for recruiting the number of men therein mentioned. You will be pleased, in consequence of the Governor's request, immediately to order as many officers as can possibly be spared from the Jersey line to go upon the recruiting service; selecting such as are best acquainted with that duty, and as are supposed to have influence in the respective counties. The words of the act are confined to "able-bodied and effective men"; but I would wish your Lordship to draw up a set of additional instructions for the recruiting officers, directing them not to enlist under the above description any deserters from the enemy; and letting them know in very explicit terms, that the recruits will, upon their arrival at camp, be inspected by the inspector-general, or one of the sub-inspectors, and, if they shall be found ruptured, or any other ways unsound, too old or too young for the service, or in any manner unqualified for soldiers, that they shall be accountable, notwithstanding they may have been passed by the county muster-masters appointed by the act. I think this caution necessary, because it would not be a difficult matter to impose an improper man upon a gentleman in the country not well acquainted with, or not very attentive to military matters.

You will be pleased further to direct the officers to send forward their recruits to camp, in parties of five or six as they obtain them; for which purpose each officer should take with him a non-commissioned

officer, and one or two trusty men, to perform that duty. Well dressed and well looking men should be selected. Your Lordship will observe by the act, that a bounty of one thousand dollars is to be paid to each recruit enlisting for the war, exclusive of *Continental bounty and emoluments;* but, that there may be no misconception or deception by the officers, or on the part of the men, you are clearly to express in the additional recruiting instructions, that the Continental bounties and emoluments only extend to clothing, land, and such other benefits as may be hereafter allowed to soldiers serving during the war; in short, that one thousand dollars is the whole bounty in money which they are to expect. And the officer is to be informed, that the two hundred dollars' bounty for each recruit is to include, and to be considered by him as a compensation for his trouble and expenses.

Officers of militia are under the act allowed to recruit men; and it is therefore necessary that they should be apprized of the bounty in money, which is to be allowed. The best way, in my opinion, for communicating this is, for the Continental officers upon their arrival in the several counties to show their instructions to the county muster-masters and county paymasters, and request them to communicate the substance of them to the officers of the militia. I shall be obliged by your Lordship's favoring me with a copy of the instructions, which you deliver to the officers, that I may file them with my papers. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE, IN PHILADELPHIA.

Morristown, 26 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have by this conveyance written to Congress on the defects of the new system for supplying the army. I shall thank you for the news and politics of the town, particularly on the subject of finance, which I think every one ought to support, and the prevailing sentiment respecting our southern affairs. The current opinion of sensible men on the propriety and practicability of affording further succour to General Lincoln from this army, under the present circumstances of it, and other matters, are what I wish much to learn. The situation of our affairs in South Carolina impresses me with many fears on account of Charleston, and with deep concern at the effect, which the loss of it may produce on the minds of people in that quarter. It is my earnest wish, that to the sentiments of others you would add your own in full and explicit terms. I shall, I believe, ask this of the other general officers. Mrs. Greene gave us the pleasure of her company yesterday, and is well. I am, &c.*

* General Greene had gone to Philadelphia, for the purpose of consulting Congress on the affairs of the quartermaster-general's department. Some radical changes were meditated in the civil departments of the army, which were believed not to have been prompted by a friendly spirit to the Commander-in-chief. "I am very confident," said General Greene before he left camp, "that there is party business going on again, and, as Mifflin is connected with it, I doubt not its being a revival of the old scheme. The measure now taking is, to be prepared to take advantage of every opening, which the distresses of the army may introduce. I wish I may be mistaken, but measures strongly indicate such a disposition." Again, he wrote from Philadelphia, "General Schuyler and others consider it a plan of Mifflin's to injure your Excellency's operations. I am now fully convinced of the reality of what I suggested to you before I came away." — *March 28th.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Morristown, 28 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

In a letter to the Board of Admiralty I communicated my sentiments respecting the subject of your letter. I observed to the Board; "With respect to the troops, that, from the detachment lately sent to the southward, and the great diminution of our force besides, occasioned by the daily expiration of the men's enlistments, it appears to me that none can be spared from the army, consistently with prudence or policy." "But should the Board finally determine on the proposed enterprise, and the troops be essential to its success," I further observed, "that, under the circumstances of the army I have stated, I should not think myself authorized to send them, without the concurrence and direction of Congress." This will show you the footing on which I found myself obliged to place the business. As to the second point, should the enterprise be undertaken, so far as my concurrence may be considered necessary, I shall have no objection to your going on the command.

With regard to a leave of absence from the army during the ensuing summer, should it be found inexpedient to go into the proposed enterprise, and under the representation of your health, you have my permission, though it was my wish and expectation to see you in the field; but, provided your views extend to a voyage, leave for this purpose must be obtained from the Congress, as I have in no instance whatever ventured to grant a furlough to any place not within the United States. I hope you will find the experiments you propose, to answer your expectations, and that you may soon experience a situation for actual service. Let me

congratulate you on the late happy event.* Mrs. Washington joins me in presenting her wishes for Mrs. Arnold on the occasion. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN, AT CHARLESTON.

Morristown, 28 March, 1780.

Dear Sir,

This will be delivered to you by Brigadier-General Duportail, chief engineer; a gentleman of whose abilities and merit I have the highest opinion, and who, if he arrives in time, will be of essential utility to you. The delay that will probably attend General Clinton's operations, in consequence of the losses that he has suffered on the voyage, makes me hope his assistance will not come too late; and the critical situation of your affairs induces me to part with him, though in case of any active operations here, I should sensibly feel the want of him. From the experience I have had of this gentleman, I recommend him to your particular confidence. You will find him able in the branch he professes; of a clear and comprehensive judgment; of extensive military science; and of great zeal, assiduity, and bravery; in short, I am persuaded you will find him a most valuable acquisition, and will avail yourself effectually of his services. You cannot employ him too much on every important occasion. Every appearance indicates, that the enemy will make a most vigorous effort to the southward. My intelligence from New York announces a further embarkation. The moment it is ascertained, I shall advise you of it, and of the corps that compose the detachment. I am, with the

* The birth of a son, which Arnold had mentioned in a recent letter.

warmest wishes for your success, and with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 28 March, 1780.

SIR,

This will inform your Excellency, that the Indians have lately made two incursions on our frontiers, taken five of the inhabitants of Tryon County, killed one, and captured a guard of thirteen militia posted at Skenesborough.

There is a point on which I would wish to obtain the sentiments and direction of Congress, as without them I am likely to be under some embarrassment. I find that the States of Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey, the only three from which I have heard upon the subject of levies (except New York, which has none to raise), have, for making up theirs, adopted the mode of voluntary enlistments for the war, under certain pecuniary bounties; namely, Rhode Island three hundred dollars, Connecticut three hundred, New Jersey one thousand, "in addition to and exclusive of the Continental bounties," as it is variously expressed; and the last two have requested officers to be sent from the army on the recruiting service. I wish to know whether there is any Continental pecuniary bountry *in such cases, and what it is,* (for I would beg leave to observe, that I shall continue to give a bounty of two hundred dollars to the old soldiers, who will reëngage for the war previously to, or on the expiration of their enlistments, unless I am directed to the contrary, if any can be prevailed on to do it for this sum only;) and, if there is a Continental bounty,

whether it is to be exclusive of what the States give, and to be advanced by warrants on the military chest, or inclusive and to be passed to the credit of the States respectively, for whose quota the recruits are enlisted, as was directed on a similar occasion by the act of the 9th of March last. It will also be necessary for Congress to determine, in case a Continental bounty is allowed, whether it is to extend as well to men whose services will expire in the course of a few months, and who may be reënlisted for the States by officers sent to the army for the purpose, which is part of the system meant to be pursued by some, as well as to those, who may be engaged by the State. I also wish to know, whether the officers, who may go on the recruiting service, in consequence of requisitions from the different governments, are to have a bounty, and what, from the United States; or whether they are to look only to their own States for a provision and allowance in the case. These points appear to me essential to be determined, and I would take the liberty to request, that Congress will be pleased to satisfy me with respect to them as soon as they shall judge it convenient. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, 30 March, 1780.

Sir,

It would seem pretty evident from the enemy's inactivity, from which we derive so many advantages, that some very considerable derangement has happened in their affairs. Whether this arises from the want of horses, the loss of military stores, or an insufficiency in the article of small craft for the transportation of troops,

or of proper ships to attempt the harbour, the result is the same to us; and I would flatter myself in the same hopes, that you have expressed on this head. You speak of the arrival of the Roebuck and transports from the southward at New York, but I have not had any information of this kind, although my inquiries have been particular. The Russell from Savannah, and some provision vessels from Cork, have got in lately, but there are no other entries of consideration, which have taken place within these few weeks.

My intelligence for some time past has looked towards a considerable move on the part of the enemy; that boats have been collecting, and a number of boatmen engaged for a particular service. But the preparations were of such a nature, as would not admit of any decisive conclusions. Since this general intelligence, I have received some of a more pointed nature, that indicates another embarkation of about two thousand five hundred men for some distant part; and, under the circumstances of the enemy to the southward, it is most probably for that quarter. I expect to have the particulars in a day or two, when I shall have the honor of writing fully to Congress on the subject. With great regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 30 March, 1780.

SIR,

You will be pleased, upon the receipt of this, to take the most expeditious measures for putting the whole corps, both horse and foot, in readiness to march. If you move, your destination will be South Carolina. The horse will go the whole way by land; the foot

will go down the Chesapeake Bay by water, and meet the horse at Petersburg. As soon as you have given the necessary orders at Burlington, you had best repair to Philadelphia, and apply to the Board of War, to whom I have written on the subject, for the articles wanted to equip the corps for so long a march. Be pleased to acknowledge this. Send your answer to the quartermaster at Trenton, who will forward it to me. I am, Sir, &c.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I. p. 84.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS AND THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

The conduct of the Marquis de Lafayette, from the first day of his entering into the American service, notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, made a most favorable impression upon Congress and the country. His ardor, energy, and unwearied activity, joined to a happy temper, winning manners, a frank disposition, and a sincere devotedness to the cause of liberty, formed a combination of traits well suited to gain the applause and attachment of the American people. These were confirmed by a discretion and maturity of judgment in all his actions, which have seldom been witnessed in a person of his years. Policy, as well as esteem, dictated the course to be pursued by Congress. The high rank of the Marquis, and his intimate alliance with a family of great influence at the court of Versailles, rendered his friendship important, as touching the relations then subsisting between France and the United States. In this view, Congress took care to bestow upon him every tribute of public approbation and respect, which his character, his acts, and his zeal for the interests of America justly merited from them. As soon as the termination of the affair at Rhode Island was made known to Congress, the following resolve was passed.

"Resolved, that the President be requested to inform the Marquis de Lafayette, that Congress have a due sense of the sacrifice he made of his personal feelings in undertaking a journey to Boston, with a view of promoting the interest of these States, at a time when an occasion was daily expected of his acquiring glory in the field, and that his gallantry in going on Rhode Island, when the greatest part of the army had retreated, and his good conduct in bringing off the pickets and out-sentries, deserve their particular approbation." — *Journals, September 9th*, 1778.

PRESIDENT LAURENS TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

"Philadelphia, 13 September, 1778.

"SIR,

"I am sensible of a particular degree of pleasure in executing the order of Congress, signified in their act of the 9th instant, which will be enclosed with this, expressing the sentiments of the representatives of the United States of America, of your high merit on the late expedition against Rhode Island. You will do Congress justice, Sir, in receiving the present acknowledgment as a tribute of the respect and gratitude of a free people. I have the honor to be, with very great respect and esteem, Sir, your obedient and most humble servant,

"HENRY LAURENS, *President.*"

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO PRESIDENT LAURENS.

"Camp, 23 September, 1778.

"SIR,

"I have just received your favor of the 13th instant, acquainting me with the honor Congress have been pleased to confer on me by their most gracious resolve. Whatever pride such an approbation may justly give me, I am not less affected by the feelings of gratefulness, and the satisfaction of thinking my endeavours were ever looked on as useful to a cause, in which my heart is so deeply interested. Be so good, Sir, as to present to Congress my plain and hearty thanks, with a frank assurance of a candid attachment, the only one worth being offered to the representatives of a free people. The moment I heard of America, I loved her; the moment I knew she was fighting for freedom, I burnt with a desire of bleeding for her; and the moment I shall be able to serve her at any time, or in any part of the world, will be among the happiest ones in my life. I never so much wished for occasions of deserving those obliging sentiments I am honored with by these States and their representatives, and that flattering confidence they have been pleased to put in me, which has filled my heart with the warmest acknowledgment and eternal affection. I am, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

Having determined to make a voyage to France for purposes, which he deemed important to the war, and which afterwards proved to be such, he visited Philadelphia and wrote the following letter explanatory of his wishes and his views.

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO PRESIDENT LAURENS.

"Philadelphia, 13 October, 1778.

"SIR,

"Whatever care I should take not to employ the precious time of Congress in private considerations, I beg leave to lay before them my present circumstances, with that confidence which naturally springs from affection and gratitude. The sentiments, which bind me to my country, can never be more properly spoken of than in the presence of men, who have done so much for their own. As long as I thought I could dispose of myself, I made it my pride and pleasure to fight under American colors, in defence of a cause, which I dare more particularly call ours, because I had the good luck to bleed for it. Now, Sir, that France is involved in a war, I am urged by a sense of duty, as well as by patriotic love, to present myself before the King, and know in what manner he judges proper to employ my services. The most agreeable of all will always be such, as may enable me to serve the common cause among those, whose friendship I have had the happiness to obtain, and whose fortune I have had the honor to follow in less smiling times. That reason, and others, which I leave to the feelings of Congress, engage me to beg from them the liberty of going home for the next winter.

"As long as there were any hopes of an active campaign, I did not think of leaving the field. Now that I see a very peaceable and undisturbed moment, I take this opportunity of waiting on Congress. In case my request is granted, I shall so manage my departure, as to be certain before going off, that the campaign is truly over. Enclosed you will find a letter from his Excellency General Washington, where he expresses his assent to my getting leave of absence. I dare flatter myself, that I shall be looked upon as a soldier on furlough, who most heartily wants to join again his colors, and his most esteemed and beloved fellow-soldiers. In case it is thought, that I can be in any way useful to the service of America, when I shall find myself among my countrymen, and in case any exertion of mine is deemed serviceable, I hope, Sir, I shall always be considered as a man, who is deeply interested in the welfare of these United States, and who has the most perfect affection, regard, and confidence for their representatives. With the highest regard I have the honor to be, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

"*In Congress, October* 21*st.* — Resolved, That the Marquis de Lafayette, Major-General in the service of the United States, have leave to go to France; and that he return at such time as shall be most convenient to him.

"Resolved, That the President write a letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, returning him the thanks of Congress for that disinterested zeal, which led him to America, and for the services he has rendered to the United States by the exertion of his courage the abilities on many signal occasions.

"Resolved, That the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America at the court of Versailles be directed to cause an elegant sword with proper devices to be made, and presented in the name of the United States to the Marquis de Lafayette."

"*October* 22*d.* — Resolved, That the following letter of recommendation of the Marquis de Lafayette be written to the King of France;

"To our great, faithful, and beloved Friend and Ally, Louis the Sixteenth, King of France and Navarre.

"The Marquis de Lafayette having obtained our leave to return to his native country, we could not suffer him to depart without testifying our deep sense of his zeal, courage, and attachment. We have advanced him to the rank of major-general in our armies, which, as well by his prudent as spirited conduct, he has manifestly merited. We recommend this young nobleman to your Majesty's notice, as one whom we know to be wise in council, gallant in the field, and patient under the hardships of war. His devotion to his sovereign has led him in all things to demean himself as an American, acquiring thereby the confidence of these United States, your good and faithful friends and allies, and the affection of their citizens. We pray God to keep your Majesty in his holy protection.

"Done at Philadelpia, the 22d Day of October, 1778. By the Congress of the United States of North America, your good Friends and Allies.

"HENRY LAURENS, *President.*"

PRESIDENT LAURENS TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

"Philadelphia, 24 October, 1778.

"SIR,

"I had the honor of presenting to Congress your letter, soliciting leave of absence, and I am directed by the House to express their thanks for your zeal in promoting that just cause in which they are engaged, and for the disinterested services you have rendered to the

United States of America. In testimony of the high esteem and affection in which you are held by the good people of these States, as well as in acknowledgment of your gallantry and military talents displayed on many signal occasions, their representatives in Congress assembled have ordered an elegant sword to be presented to you by the American minister at the court of Versailles.

"Enclosed within the present cover will be found an act of Congress, of the 21st instant, authorizing these declarations, and granting a furlough for your return to France, to be extended at your own pleasure. I pray God to bless and protect you, Sir, to conduct you in safety to the presence of your prince, and to the re-enjoyment of your noble family and friends. I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, and with the most sincere affection, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"HENRY LAURENS, *President.*"

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO PRESIDENT LAURENS.

"Philadelphia, 26 October, 1778.

"SIR,

"I have received your Excellency's obliging letter, enclosing the several resolutions Congress have honored me with, and the leave of absence they have been pleased to grant. Nothing can make me happier, than the reflection that my services have met with their approbation. The glorious testimonial of confidence and satisfaction repeatedly bestowed on me by the representatives of America, though superior to my merit, cannot exceed the grateful sentiments they have excited. I consider the noble present offered to me in the name of the United States, as the most flattering honor; it is my most fervent desire soon to employ that sword in their service against the common enemy of my country, and of their faithful and beloved allies.

"That liberty, safety, wealth and concord may ever extend to these United States, is the ardent wish of a heart glowing with a devoted zeal and unbounded love for them, and the highest regard and the most sincere affection for their representatives. Be pleased, Sir, to present my thanks to them, and to accept yourself the assurance of my respectful attachment. I have the honor to be, with profound veneration, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

"LAFAYETTE."

In a letter written at the same time by the French minister in

the United States, he spoke in the most flattering terms of the youthful general.

"I ought not to terminate this long despatch," says M. Gerard to the Count de Vergennes, "without rendering to the wisdom and dexterity of the Marquis de Lafayette, in the part he has taken in these discussions, the justice which is due to his merits. He has given most salutary counsels, authorized by his friendship and experience. The Americans have strongly solicited his return with the troops, which the king may send. He has replied with a due sensibility, but with an entire resignation to the will of the king. I cannot forbear saying, that the conduct equally prudent, courageous, and amiable of the Marquis de Lafayette, has made him the idol of the Congress, the army, and the people of America. A high opinion is entertained of his military talents. You know how little I am inclined to adulation; but I should be wanting in justice, if I did not transmit to you these testimonials, which are here in the mouth of the whole world."

Dr. Franklin was instructed by Congress to procure a sword in France, and present it to the Marquis in conformity to their resolves.

DR. FRANKLIN TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

"Passy, 24 August, 1779.

"SIR,

"The Congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a sword, as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war, in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are therefore represented upon it. These, with a few emblematic figures, all admirably well executed, make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we have of your worth, and our obligations to you. For this, figures, and even words, are found insufficient. I therefore only add, that, with the most perfect esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN.

"P. S. My grandson goes to Havre with the sword, and will have the honor of presenting it to you."

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO DR. FRANKLIN.

"Havre, 29 August, 1779.

"SIR,

"Whatever expectations might have been raised from the sense of past favors, the goodness of the United States for me has ever been such, that on every occasion it far surpasses any idea I could have conceived. A new proof of that flattering truth I find in the noble present, which Congress has been pleased to honor me with, and which is offered in such a manner by your Excellency, as will exceed any thing but the feelings of my unbounded gratitude.

"In some of the devices I cannot help finding too honorable a reward for those slight services, which in concert with my fellow-soldiers, and under the godlike American hero's orders, I had the good luck to render. The sight of these actions, where I was a witness of American bravery and patriotic spirit, I shall ever enjoy with that pleasure, which becomes a heart glowing with love for the nation, and the most ardent zeal for their glory and happiness. Assurances of gratitude, which I beg leave to present to your Excellency, are much too inadequate to my feelings, and nothing but those sentiments may properly acknowledge your kindness towards me. The polite manner in which Mr. Franklin was pleased to deliver that inestimable sword, lays me under great obligations to him, and demands my particular thanks. With the most perfect respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

No. II. p. 195.

SIR HENRY CLINTON TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

SIR,

My having been absent from New York for some days past has prevented me from sooner acknowledging your letter of the 14th instant. Let me assure you, Sir, that my wishes coincide sincerely with those which you express for the completion of a purpose equally urged by justice and humanity. Allow me to say, that I am happy to find the direction of this affair is now entirely reposed in military hands, as I can from thence augur the same liberality of negotiation, on the part of your commissioners, which I trust you

will find on ours. Colonel O'Hara having sailed for England, it requires a day or two for the person, who is to supply his place, to inform himself of the points on which the business will turn. On Monday I shall send down Colonel Hyde and Captain André to Staten Island, that they may meet your commissioners either at Amboy or Elizabethtown, as you may wish. I have the honor to be, &c.

H. CLINTON.

No. III. p. 214.

EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.

According to the previous arrangement between General Washington and Sir Henry Clinton, the American and British commissioners met at Amboy, on the 12th of April, 1779, with ample instructions on each side for agreeing to an exchange of prisoners, either on the basis of a general cartel, or as extending only to particular cases. By a resolve of Congress, the Commander-in-chief was authorized to negotiate "a general exchange of prisoners, comprehending the convention troops, or a more partial agreement for any particular or definite number of prisoners, and to fix and conclude upon the terms and conditions of the said exchange, ascertaining and allowing an equivalent of inferior for superior officers, and an equivalent of privates for officers, according to such proportion as has been customary, or as shall appear to him to be just and equitable." Upon these broad principles the subject was left in the hands of the Commander-in-chief. He gave a copy of the proceedings of Congress to the commissioners, and added the following instructions, dated April 10th.

TO COLONEL WILLIAM DAVIES, AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ROBERT HANSON HARRISON.

"Gentlemen; The foregoing writing contains the proceedings of Congress on the 5th ultimo, on the subject of your meeting at Amboy on Monday next. You will make these the rule of your conduct; and, if you cannot establish a general cartel with the British commissioners, comprehending the convention troops, agreeably to the resolution, and to which the power you have received from me to-day is only adapted, you will then take up the business on a more limited scale, according to the alternative mentioned by Con-

gress, and make a partial agreement for any particular or definite number of prisoners, fixing and concluding upon the terms and conditions of exchange; and ascertaining and allowing an equivalent of inferior for superior officers, and an equivalent of privates for officers, according to such proportion as has been customary, or shall appear just; not exceeding, however, in any equivalent that may be given in private men the number of one thousand on the exchange of three hundred and thirty-one of our officers, or a greater number."

These instructions were drawn up in conformity to the opinion of a council of war, particularly the closing part respecting the number of privates to be given in exchange for officers.

Extract from the Proceedings of a Council of War. — "As the enemy have few or no private men of ours in their hands, the exchange at present must turn (on their principle, from which we have every reason to believe they will not depart) upon our giving a considerable proportion of privates in exchange for our officers in their possession. An estimate of the amount on the several propositions and ratios, which have been suggested, is herewith submitted. The General therefore requests the advice of the council, what numbers of private men, consistently with justice to the prisoners in captivity and to the public in general, ought to be determined as the ultimate proportion, which should govern an exchange at this time, and which the commissioners on our part should be instructed not to exceed.

"Having considered the request of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief, we think they may give a thousand, but not a greater number."

The following are the instructions for negotiating the cartel, which were given by Sir Henry Clinton to the British commissioners.

TO COLONEL WEST HYDE AND CAPTAIN JOHN ANDRE.

"Gentlemen; You will take care not to admit of any preamble, title, or expression, tending to the acknowledgment of independency on Great Britain. You are to treat on the exchange of prisoners only, not on the ransom for money, which is the usual plan of cartels. You are to treat for the exchange of prisoners of war only (including the troops of the convention of Saratoga), not for that of civil officers or inhabitants. You will avoid all negotiations on the affairs of money or accounts; but, in case it should be agitated, you may just say, that for the time past it is to be concluded,

that the balance is greatly in favor of England, as in the first campaign we had upwards of five thousand for a considerable time, and that the convention army has received their subsistence from time to time, and acquitted these debts.

"You will propose the free admission of surgeons to take care of their own sick and wounded, and that they provide medicine at their own expense. If they should demand payment for the carriage of the clothing lately sent, or any other time, or demand payment for the carriages on the late march to Virginia, you will act in it as you think equitable; and, if it should be insisted on, you may stipulate a certain sum, and know the extent of the demand (fixing the payment in gold or silver) before it is acceded to. Should it be objected by the enemy's commissioners, that, the cartel being between Sir Henry Clinton and General Washington, not between nations at war, it would be in force only during their holding the command of the two armies, an article may be framed to express, that it should rest with Great Britain and the Congress to give it stability during the continuance of the war by a ratification within the space of months."

The following letters, written by the two parties to their respective commanders, will show with what spirit the first interviews were conducted, and that there were radical points of difference not embraced in their instructions.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

"Amboy, 14 April, 1779.

"SIR,

"We landed on Monday about 12 o'clock, and yesterday had the first conference with the gentlemen deputed to meet us. At interchanging our powers, we were not a little surprised to find ours objected to, as to their competence to effect a general, permanent cartel, these being the same grounds on which they had before obliged British commissioners to break off a similar conference. They wished to have read in our commission from your Excellency, 'I do hereby *in virtue of full powers, to me delegated*, nominate and appoint you,' &c. &c. We also thought it rather inauspicious, and not easily to be reconciled to the zeal expressed by the enemy for an exchange, to hear their commissioners in a first interview propose, that if your Excellency was not authorized to pledge the faith of the nation, the release of prisoners might be deferred till such authority could be obtained from Europe.

"Solicitous however to find if any desire of a treaty existed on their

part, and cordially resolved to attempt every thing on ours, we entered on the subject; and from our conversation of yesterday and this morning have been able to observe, that, although they conceive our powers inadequate to a general cartel, they do not allege them to be so as to a present exchange of prisoners, nor can we find where they mean to draw the line, which is to circumscribe our regulations for the future; we are therefore inclined to hope that in this we are disputing on words. They disclaim all intention to draw us into an acknowledgment of their independence, and have fully satisfied us, that the preamble may be couched in terms not repugnant to our general mode of expression with respect to them. They appear willing to talk of an exchange without entering into accounts. But they style General Burgoyne a *Commander-in-chief*, and intimate that he and the other general officers should be first exchanged.

"They will not accede to a general delivery of prisoners, pretending, contrary to what we know to be the case, that the balance is greatly in their favor. They profess ignorance of all transactions in Georgia, and refuse to enter into any agreement extending to prisoners taken there. They cavil upon the rates at which unequal ranks might be interchanged, where their interest in the present case appears concerned. And they seem to be aiming in the mode of exchange at an arrangement, which may leave private soldiers in their possession.

"We will not however despair of agreeing upon some measures for granting relief to the whole, or a large portion of the prisoners now in their hands, and of fixing some line by which to be guided on future occasions of this nature. We take the liberty to observe to your Excellency, that we cannot recommend the concession they require in the matters relative to our powers, confident that the main point of shortening or alleviating the pain of captivity is in no manner connected with it; and as we think it only demanded in the same spirit of encroachment, with which, in each successive power granted to commissioners for treating on this subject, they have affected to display more at large their usurped dignities. We must acknowledge that the gentlemen we have met, are personally such as we could have wished to confer with. We have the honor, &c.

WEST HYDE,
JOHN ANDRÉ."

TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Amboy, 18 April, 1779.

"SIR,

"We beg leave to inform your Excellency, that, with respect to the business of the commission, with which we are honored, we have been busily engaged in it ever since Tuesday morning; and thus far to but little purpose. The gentlemen appointed on the other side, though they profess the greatest liberality of sentiment and generosity on the part of Sir Henry Clinton, have not made a single proposal admissible in our opinion. As for a general cartel, all idea of accomplishing one was over in a very short time after we met, and we have been chiefly employed on the subject of a particular one for relieving the officers on Long Island, in which we have found many difficulties, and such as are not, and we fear will not be removed. It is likely we shall have some new propositions to-day or to-morrow morning. If we cannot accord to them, which we are almost certain will be the case, we mean to make the British commissioners an offer.

"In the course of negotiation the British commissioners have exhibited a return, reviving their claim to four hundred men and officers taken at the Cedars. This we found no difficulty in rejecting. They have also exhibited another, comprehending the prisoners, as they say, captured in the late actions in Georgia, amounting to sixty-one officers and eight hundred non-commissioned rank and file, besides whom they tell us there are several other prisoners, both officers and men. This too we have determined to reject from our consideration; and we are determined not to go into it. We are not officially informed of the captures, nor do we wish to be. We are exceedingly sorry the old rule of exchange was departed from; or at least that it should be allowable to give a proportion of privates for officers, while we had any officers of the enemy's in our hands. The mode will operate most forcibly against us; and introducing it in one case, whatever declarations we may be able to make to the contrary, will be to establish the precedent both with the enemy and with every officer of ours now in captivity, or who may hereafter be taken, and who will claim the same indulgence. General Burgoyne, at least his exchange, is a great obstacle in our business. We have the honor to be, &c.

WILLIAM DAVIES,
ROBERT H. HARRISON."

It is hardly necessary to add, that all attempts at an agreement failed. Propositions were made by each party, and the various topics connected with the subject were discussed in detail, but the commission was dissolved on the 23d of April, without coming to any results. There were many obstacles in the way, but the chief one consisted in the proposed exchange of privates for officers at a stipulated ratio. The British wished to obtain all the convention troops by such a mode of exchange; but this aim was defeated by the instructions of General Washington, in which he limited to one thousand the number of private men, that should be given for American officers.

SIR HENRY CLINTON TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN.

"*New York, May 11th.* — I have the honor to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information copies of all papers, that relate to the proceedings of the commissioners appointed for the purpose of settling a general cartel. From the appearance of candor shown in the first proposal of this business, and the indignation expressed by the rebel officers, prisoners with us, against their own people for their former disappointment, I was led to expect success in the late negotiation, and that we should have been able to recover the whole of the convention army; but I now almost despair of their redemption on any terms, which I can possibly accede to; and the event fully convinces me, that the proposal made by Mr. Washington had no other object in view, but to still the clamors of the officers who are our prisoners."

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

"*Whitehall, June 25th.* — It was a great concern to me to find, that the issue of the congress at Amboy for the exchange of prisoners had proved as ineffectual as the former meetings for that purpose; for, although I could not suppose the rebel leaders ignorant that an exchange would be for our advantage, I had with you entertained a hope, that the remonstrances of their own troops, and the unwillingness of the militia to expose themselves to the hazard of a long confinement, would prevail over their political reluctance. This last trial, however, proves that some other means than negotiation must be employed to force them to an exchange, and I should think the sending the militia of the northern and middle provinces to Georgia would be a probable means of producing this effect."

If such a trial had been made, the minister would doubtless have found himself in a mistake. It is a little remarkable, that an exchange should be expected upon such grounds as are intimated in both these letters. There is nothing said in either of them, as to terms of reciprocity. Sir Henry Clinton had relied on the "indignation of the American prisoners against their own people," as an inducement sufficiently strong to extort conditions suitable to his wishes; and Lord George Germain was astonished, that the Americans should refuse to make an agreement which, according to his own view of it, would be to the "advantage" of their enemies. Why should there be any surprise, that a negotiation undertaken upon such principles should not succeed? Disappointment there might be, but certainly there was no room for surprise, and much less for censure of their opponents, who probably saw through the artifice, and did not choose to be duped by it. In short, both parties were guided by their interests, and neither of them could be expected to make sacrifices for the benefit of the other without a satisfactory equivalent, of which each party must from the nature of the case be its own judge.

No. IV. p. 235.

GENERAL ARNOLD'S TRIAL.

The first acts of General Arnold, in his command at Philadelphia, though performed in strict accordance with his duty, were such as to render him unpopular with the citizens. He issued a proclamation requiring the shops to be closed and forbidding any sales to be made, till a joint committee of Congress and the government of Pennsylvania should examine the goods that remained in the city when the enemy left it, and ascertain whether any of them belonged to the king of Great Britain, or to any person adhering to the royal cause. Although this order was the necessary consequence of a resolve of Congress, and was advised by some of the principal inhabitants, yet it seemed oppressive to many persons in its operation, and was a source of loud complaint.

The odium, which this first measure brought upon the commandant, was neither removed nor weakened by his subsequent carriage and conduct. On the contrary, his haughty and overbearing manners, his arbitrary proceedings in his official station, his disrespect

for the civil authority of the State, and the faults of his private character, gradually obscured the splendid military reputation on which he mainly relied for securing public favor, and involved him in difficulties of a serious nature. The Executive Council of Pennsylvania, after submitting to what they deemed many indignities, and remonstrating in vain against certain offensive acts, at last determined to bring the matter to a formal and decisive issue. At a meeting held on the 3d of February, 1779, the following resolves were passed.

"This Board having maturely considered the general tenor and course of the military command exercised by Major-General Arnold in this city and State, and divers transactions which have appeared to this Board during his command, do resolve unanimously, *First*, That the same have been in many respects oppressive to the faithful subjects of the State, unworthy of his rank and station, highly discouraging to those who have manifested their attachment to the liberties and interests of America, and disrespectful to the supreme executive authority of the State. Wherefore, resolved unanimously, *Secondly*, That nothing but the most urgent and pressing necessity can justify or induce this Board to call forth any wagons or militia, or otherwise subject the good people of this State to the power and command of the said General Arnold within the State, should he resume it upon his return. *Thirdly*, Ordered, That the attorney-general do prosecute the said General Arnold for such illegal and oppressive conduct as is cognizable in the courts of law. And, that this Board may not be supposed capable of passing the above resolves upon mere general grounds, and more especially in the case of one, who has formerly distinguished himself in the public service, they think proper to declare, that the consideration last mentioned has hitherto restrained them from taking proper notice of General Arnold, hoping that every unworthy transaction would be the last, or that a becoming sense of such improprieties would effect an alteration of conduct. But finding that tenderness has only led to insult and farther oppression, duty to the State, and regard to the interest and happiness of the good people thereof, who must be affected by all abuses of power, oblige them thus to take notice thereof; and farther to declare, that the said resolves are founded upon the following articles, in which they have sufficient ground to esteem General Arnold culpable."

Eight distinct articles, or charges, were then enumerated, implying neglect of duty or abuse of power. The resolves and charges

were laid before Congress by order of the Council. A copy was likewise sent to the Commander-in-chief.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

"*Middlebrook, February 9th*, 1779.—Sir; I have the honor of your Excellency's favor of the 5th instant, enclosing sundry resolves of the Executive Council, respecting the conduct of Major-General Arnold during his command in the city of Philadelphia. Previously to the receipt of your letter, General Arnold, who had arrived at head-quarters the day before, had shown me a letter from the Council to him, accompanied by a copy of the same resolves, in which they advise him, that a copy was also laid before Congress. This relieved me from some doubts, which arose in my mind, respecting the line of conduct, which the Council might expect me to pursue; for, as the matter is before Congress, that honorable body will no doubt decide upon the measures proper to be taken in the affair.

I have the honor to be, &c."

Congress referred the subject to a committee, who, after going through as full an examination as the testimony presented to them would admit, made a report, to which were appended the following resolves.

"*First*, That as to the first and second charges, no evidence appears tending to prove the same; that the said charges are fully explained, and the appearances they carry of criminality fully obviated by clear, unquestionable evidence. That the third charge, admitted by General Arnold in one instance, be transmitted to the Commander-in-chief. As to the fourth charge, there appears no evidence to prove the same, and it is triable only in a common-law court. That the fifth charge be transmitted to the Commander-in-chief.

"*Secondly*, That the recommendatory letter in the sixth charge is not within the spirit of the resolve of Congress, or a usurpation of authority.

"*Thirdly*, That the letter in the seventh charge, though not in terms of perfect civility, is not expressed in terms of indignity; and that the conduct of the said Supreme Executive Council towards the said General Arnold, and the unexampled measures they took to obtain satisfaction, totally and absolutely preclude all right to concessions or acknowledgment.

"*Fourthly*, On the eighth charge, that there is no evidence to prove the same."

From the tenor of these resolves it is evident, that the spirit of party mingled with other considerations, and that the committee, to say the least, had no intimate alliance with the Executive Council of Pennsylvania. The report was not acted upon nor taken up by Congress. Soon afterwards the matter was referred anew to a joint committee of Congress and of the Assembly and Council of Pennsylvania. This committee agreed, that the charges should be submitted to a court-martial, under the direction of the Commander-in chief. Congress decided, however, that only four of the charges were of such a nature as to be cognizable by a court-martial. These were specified and sent to General Washington. Respecting this decision, General Arnold wrote to Congress on the 14th of April.

"I cannot but testify my surprise, that a court-martial should be ordered to try me for offences, of some of which the committee of Congress in their report say, 'There appears no evidence tending to prove the same, that the said charges are fully explained, and the appearances they carry of criminality fully obviated by clear, unquestionable evidence.' If Congress have been induced to take this measure for the public good, and to avoid a breach with this State, however hard my case may be, and however I am injured as an individual, I will suffer with pleasure, until a court-martial can have an opportunity of doing me justice by acquitting me of these charges a second time."

It must be remembered, that Congress had never acted on the report of the committee, by which Arnold had been acquitted; nor is it probable there would have been a majority in favor of that report, although there was a strong party in the house, who were decidedly his friends, and who partook of his feelings in regard to the Council of Pennsylvania. Party feuds were at this time very strong, and it was unfortunate that Arnold's case was of such a kind as could not fail to keep them alive. It is reasonable to suppose, that he was in some degree a sufferer on this account, in addition to the just causes of complaint against him.

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, April.* — Dear Sir; Agreeably to your Excellency's advice to me when at camp, I requested Congress to appoint a committee to examine into the charges alleged against me by the President and Council of this State. My request was complied with. The report of the committee I have taken the liberty to enclose. After perusing it your Excellency will doubtless be surprised to find, that Congress have directed a court-martial to try me (among other

charges) for some of those of which their committee have acquitted me in the fullest and clearest manner; and though this conduct may be necessary for the public interest, it is hard to reconcile it to the feelings of an individual, who is thereby injured.

"Mr. Reed has by his address kept the affair in suspense for near two months, and at last obtained the foregoing resolution of Congress, and will, I make no doubt, use every artifice to delay the proceeding of a court-martial, as it is his interest that the affair should remain in the dark; and the Congress, to avoid a breach with this State, have declined deciding on the report of their committee. I have no doubt of obtaining justice from a court-martial, as every officer in the army must feel himself injured by the cruel and unprecedented treatment I have met with. I must earnestly entreat your Excellency, that a court-martial may be directed to sit as soon as possible. If it can be done in this city, I shall esteem it a great favor, as my wounds make it extremely inconvenient for me to attend at camp, where it is very difficult to obtain the necessary accommodations for the recovery of them. It will also be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to produce in camp the evidences, which are all in this city. But, should the service make it absolutely necessary that the court should be held at camp, I beg that as early a day may be fixed for it as possible, and that the President and Council of this State may have such notice, that the court may not be delayed for want of their evidence. Mine will be ready at the shortest notice. When your Excellency considers my sufferings, and the cruel situation I am in, your own humanity and feeling as a soldier will render every thing I can say farther on the subject unnecessary. I am, dear Sir, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ARNOLD.

"*Middlebrook, April 20th.* — Dear Sir; I have, in obedience to the resolve of Congress, ordered a court-martial to sit at this place on the 1st of May, to try you on the first, second, third, and fifth charges exhibited against you by the Council of the State of Pennsylvania. It would have given me great pleasure to indulge you with a court at Philadelphia; but such is the weak state of the line in respect to general and field officers, that it would have been impossible, without entirely divesting the army of officers of that rank.

I am, Sir, &c."

A similar notice was communicated to the Council of Pennsylvania. (See above p. 231.) The views of the Council on the sub-

ject, and General Washington's remarks in reply, may likewise be seen in the same place.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ARNOLD.

"*Middlebrook, April 28th.* — Dear Sir; I informed you in a short line of the 26th that your trial was postponed, with a promise to explain the reason at another opportunity. I had received a letter from the Council, representing that the period appointed for the purpose, and the previous notice given, were too short to admit of the necessary evidence being produced in time. One of the most material, they inform me, is in Virginia, and two others in Carolina. The necessity of a free and full investigation, both for the sake of public justice and for your own honor, made it my duty to attend to this representation, and defer the trial to a future day. I have therefore postponed it with this alternative, that it shall come on by the 1st of June, if the Council think the most essential witness can be procured in that time; or the 1st of July, if it be thought necessary to wait the arrival of the two gentlemen said to be in Carolina. Though the delay in your situation must be irksome, I am persuaded you will be of opinion with me, that it is best on every principle to submit to it rather than there should be the least appearance of precipitancy in the affair. I am, dear Sir, &c."

PRESIDENT REED TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, May 1st.* — Dear Sir; I believe the train in which General Arnold's affair is put will be quite acceptable, and, Colonel Fitzgerald having accidentally come to town since our letter, we shall by that means save considerable time. One of the gentlemen from South Carolina having written a letter at Derby to General Arnold, which the messenger lost on the road, it was brought to me open. From this it appears pretty probable, that they are designedly absent, and if so it will be vain to delay on this account, as it is not likely they would obey any summons within a reasonable time. Having informed Congress previously to their departure, and requested that they might be detained for examination, we have done all in our power. If the trial cannot be completed without their testimony, it is probable the court may adjourn it. We have nothing in view but public justice. But there appears such a connexion between their knowledge of sundry facts, and the testimony we are possessed of, that I doubt whether their attendance will not be found necessary in the sequel. The proposition of the court-martial came

from us, by which we gave the fullest proof of our confidence in the gentlemen of the army. We were desirous that all the points might go to that tribunal; but Congress thought otherwise, and selected such as they thought proper.

"As the matter now stands, I think, upon three weeks' notice of the precise day at any time, the trial may be proceeded on. I profess I am at a loss how we shall proceed, when the witnesses are unwilling to attend. Congress have declined exercising any compulsory power over their officers on the occasion; and there is no process of civil law to compel an attendance on a military court, and especially out of the State; nor is there any power to oblige a witness to submit to examination out of court. However, I do not know that farther time will remedy these evils; so that we must proceed under them. The trial here, or in the neighbourhood of this city, would have obviated them in a degree; but that I am persuaded would be incompatible with the public service, and is not to be desired or expected. Some persons here have affected to treat the using of public wagons for private use as a trifling and inconsiderable matter. Lest the same idea might be propagated at camp, we thought it necessary to mention, that it is thought of high consequence in this State, and that a contrary sentiment inadvertently and hastily adopted would be attended with very injurious consequences to the public. I believe nothing farther was meant."

"*May 8th.* — It is apparent to us, that your Excellency has not understood us. We think there is a material difference between a public body exhibiting *charges* against a man to his superior officers or authority, and expressing their sense of his conduct and assigning their reasons for it. In the first case they virtually offer themselves as prosecutors, appeal to some tribunal, and claim the infliction of the punishment annexed by civil or military law on the offences charged. In the other case, they give an opinion operating only as the world shall give it weight, drawing with it no military or civil punishment. In this last view we acted in this business, and, considering ourselves entitled to appear in either capacity, it was matter of concern to us to see that the idea, which was carefully excluded as we thought from the resolution of Congress, appeared in your Excellency's letter, that a trial was directed on the second, third, and fifth *charges exhibited by the Council against him.*

"Our wish was to be understood not as having exhibited any charges to Congress or yourself against him, except that of abusing wagons, and that only that he might remain to answer. And, though at first view it may seem a refinement, yet, if your Excellency

will reflect upon the consequences, you will see they are very important. For if a public body, expressing their sense of an officer's conduct, are to be considered as exhibiting charges against him to superior authority, it will follow, that they become his prosecutors, must support the charges, attend any tribunal however distant, inconvenient, or prejudicial to the other public affairs of the State, or subject themselves to the imputation of malice and wantonness. And we think it would not be a pleasing sight to your Excellency to behold the legislative or executive bodies of the States following the camp under all its inconveniences and dangers on such occasions. If military punishment is sought, the seekers must submit to the inconveniences, whatever they are; otherwise injustice may be done to the individual. But when no such object is in view, but the public judgment is appealed to, the individual has his opportunity of vindicating himself and of showing the opinion formed of him to be unjust. There has been scarcely a bad governor on the continent, of whom the public bodies have not expressed such opinions, and yet there was always a regular tribunal and proper authority where they might have sought redress.

"In this transaction, though a remedy for public abuses was our object, unforeseen and unexpected difficulties occurred until we got it put into your Excellency's hands. We were encouraged by that circumstance, and are now resolved to go through with it, but are inclined to believe, that we shall in future bear our part patiently of the consequence of any evils of this kind, as the less inconvenience of the two. In the present case, for the sake of peace, and that Congress might not consume more days (for many were spent on this comparatively trifling business), we proposed the present trial, and are content to be considered in any point of view necessary to bring it to a proper issue. When we speak of difficulties or obstructions, we beg you to believe we confine our views entirely to this city. The parties, which then divided the State, created and continued them. If the same transaction were to happen again, different measures we think would be pursued.

"The President has communicated to us, that he has received in a private letter a notification of the trial for the 1st of June, which is quite agreeable to us, and the letter has been delivered to General Arnold accordingly. The necessary connexion of evidence on one point will fail by the absence of Clarkson and Franks, but, as we have no doubt it was intentional, we think postponing the trial on that account would be of no effect, as they would not probably return to these parts till it was finished, even if postponed to the 1st

of July or a later day. We shall have the papers got in readiness, with such other preparation as may be necessary. We do not expect, that any influence or authority of ours will induce the appearance of those from this State, whose appearance is necessary. We must therefore endeavour to supply it as well as circumstances will admit. We are sorry your Excellency should suppose we had suspicions of the honor and impartiality of the officers, who are to compose the court. If such is the natural inference from our expression it was a very great inaccuracy. We thought there was a material distinction between the doing an act, and the nature of it when done; that the objects of consideration were quite different, and, from sentiments expressed here by some, we had reasons to apprehend that persons unacquainted with the nature of the service, and the consequences of perverting the public wagons, might deem it a small matter, and treat it accordingly. But we would much rather have omitted the remark wholly, than have given room for such a construction.

"Upon the whole, we beg leave to assure your Excellency of our very sincere regard, and most respectful attachment, and that we shall on all occasions most cheerfully coöperate in every measure you shall recommend to us; being fully convinced that in all your views and actions a disinterested love to your country, and regard to its safety and happiness, are the ruling principles of your conduct.

"Signed by order of the Council,

"JOSEPH REED."

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, May 5th.* — Dear General; I have been honored with your Excellency's two letters of the 26th and 28th of April, and am extremely sorry that it should be thought there was a necessity of postponing my trial to so late a period as June or July, for no other reason than the Council of this State 'representing that the period appointed for the purpose, and the previous notice given, were too short to admit of the necessary evidence being produced in time.' From a candid view of the charges and of the whole proceedings against me contained in the papers transmitted to your Excellency, you must be fully persuaded that I have been unjustly accused, and that I have been refused justice from Congress on the report of their committee. From a knowledge of my public conduct, since I have been in the army, no man is better qualified to judge whether I have merited the treatment I have received.

"If your Excellency thinks me criminal, for Heaven's sake let me be immediately tried, and, if found guilty, executed. I want no favor; I ask only justice. If this is denied me by your Excellency, I have nowhere to seek it but from the candid public, before whom I shall be under the necessity of laying the whole matter. Let me beg of you, Sir, to consider that a set of artful, unprincipled men in office may misrepresent the most innocent actions, and, by raising the public clamor against your Excellency, place you in the same disagreeable situation I am in. Having made every sacrifice of fortune and blood, and become a cripple in the service of my country, I little expected to meet the ungrateful returns I have received from my countrymen; but as Congress have stamped ingratitude as a current coin, I must take it. I wish your Excellency, for your long and eminent services, may not be paid in the same coin. I have nothing left but the little reputation I have gained in the army. Delay in the present case is worse than death; and, when it is considered, that the President and Council have had three months to produce their evidence, I cannot suppose the ordering of a court-martial to determine the matter immediately in the least precipitating it, as in justice it ought to have been determined long since. The President and Council wish to put it off until the campaign opens, considering undoubtedly that the service will then prevent the court-martial from sitting, and cause the trial to be postponed until the end of the campaign. I must therefore entreat, that a court-martial may be ordered to sit as soon as possible, and, if the court find sufficient reasons, they will of course adjourn to a longer time. Not doubting but my request will be granted, I have the honor to be, &c."

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, May 14th.* — Dear Sir; Yesterday I had the honor to receive your Excellency's favor of the 7th instant, informing me that the time of my trial was finally fixed on the 1st day of June; which I am very happy to hear, as nothing can be more disagreeable than the cruel situation I am in at present, not only as my character will continue to suffer until I am acquitted by a court-martial, but as it effectually prevents my joining the army, which I wish to do as soon as my wounds will permit; and to render my country every service in my power at this critical time; for, though I have been ungratefully treated, I do not consider it as from my countrymen in general, but from a set of men, who, void of principle, are governed entirely by private interest.

"The interest I have in the welfare and happiness of my country, which I have ever evinced when in my power, will I hope always overcome my personal resentment for any injury I can possibly receive from individuals. I have the honor to be, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO PRESIDENT REED.

"*Middlebrook, May 15th.* — Sir; I have not yet been favored with an answer to the letter, which I did myself the honor to write to you on the 27th ultimo. Whatever may be the determination of the Council respecting the alternative proposed, of the 1st of June or July, for General Arnold's trial, I am anxious to be informed of it, that no more time may be lost than cannot be avoided. If the witnesses are to be called from Carolina, the summons ought to go to them without delay. I have received another letter from General Arnold, pressing for a speedy trial. That gentleman's situation is very interesting to his character and feelings, and gives him a right to expect from me, as a piece of justice, that his fate may be decided as soon as it can be done consistently with a full and free investigation. If he should be found innocent, the sooner he is acquitted the better; if guilty, justice cannot take place too soon. At the same time that I wish the Council to be assured I am as unwilling to precipitate as to retard the trial, I am persuaded they will cheerfully enable me to act such a part, as will avoid the imputation of unnecessary delay, and will be pleased to afford me the aid requested in my last. I am, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ARNOLD.

"*Middlebrook, May* 15. — Dear Sir; I have received your favor of the 5th instant, and read it with no small concern. I feel my situation truly delicate and embarrassing. On one side your anxiety, very natural in such circumstances, and the convenience of the army, strongly urge me to bring the affair to a speedy conclusion; on the other, the pointed representations of the State on the subject of witnesses, and the impropriety of precipitating a trial so important in itself, seem to leave me no choice. I beg you to be convinced, that I do not indulge any sentiments unfavorable to you. While my duty obliges me, and I am sure you wish me, to avoid even the semblance of partiality, I cautiously suspend my judgment till the result of a full and fair trial shall determine the merits of the prosecution.

"In the mean time, I entreat you to realize the motives, which impel me to delay, and the consequences of an appearance of precipitancy, both to yourself and me. I am told by a public body, that the most important witnesses are at such a distance, as to require considerable time to produce them. The charges are of a serious and interesting nature, and demand the freest investigation. I could not answer it to the public, were I not to allow the time deemed necessary for the purpose. The interpretation, that might otherwise be given to my conduct, needs no comment. An acquittal, should that be the event of the trial, would in this case be no acquittal. If you consider the relation in which you stand to the army, it will suggest an additional reason for not being hasty. I have not yet received an answer from the Council, respecting the alternative mentioned in my last. I have since written to the President enclosing a letter for you, appointing the 1st of June; which I requested him to forward, in case that period should not be thought too soon. It is my fixed intention, that the trial at the latest shall come on the 1st of July, and I shall endeavour to let it meet with no interruption from military operations. I sincerely wish it may with propriety take place before. I write to the Council by this opportunity. Believe, my dear Sir, that I have no other object in view, than to act in such a manner, as, when all the circumstances of my conduct are known, will convince the world and yourself of my strict impartiality. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c."

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, May 18th.* — Dear General; Yesterday I had the honor of receiving your favor of the 15th instant. I have not the least doubt of your Excellency's wishing to bring my affair to a speedy conclusion, and of doing me ample justice. I am extremely sorry my cruel situation should cause your Excellency the least embarrassment or uneasiness. I am sensible you have more than your share of difficulties already, and heartily wish I could lessen rather than add to them. I have not the least thought, that you have any other object in view, than doing strict justice to the public and to me; and, as I am conscious of not having done any thing to forfeit your good opinion, I have not the least idea of your harbouring any sentiments unfavorable to me.

"I am sensible the charges are of a serious nature, and it is my sincere wish to have the matter fully investigated; neither do I wish to precipitate the trial in the least; but here I cannot help observing, that the public body, who have assured your Excellency that

the evidences are at such a distance as to require a considerable time to produce them, have had nearly four months since they made the charges to produce evidence to support them, and it appears to me they cannot with the least propriety or color of reason wish for a longer time. It has already been sufficient to send from one end of the continent to the other. I have no idea, that, if the trial comes on the 1st of June, the impartial public will suppose the affair in the least precipitated. It will then rest with the court-martial, who, if sufficient reasons are given, will doubtless postpone the trial to a longer period. I am fully convinced of your Excellency's impartiality, and wish for nothing more than justice, being satisfied, that, when the affair is fully investigated, I shall be acquitted with honor, and be still thought worthy of the favorable sentiments, which your Excellency has expressed for me on many occasions.

"I have the honor to be, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ARNOLD.

"*Head-Quarters, June 2d.* — Dear Sir; I am sorry to inform you that the situation of affairs will not permit a court-martial to proceed on your trial at this time. The movements of the enemy make it indispensably necessary, that the army should at least advance towards the North River, with all practicable expedition, and require that the officers appointed to compose the court should be with the several commands. The following is a copy of the opinion of the general officers upon the occasion, who were convened yesterday evening to consider some points, which I judged it material to submit to them respecting your trial, in consequence of a letter from the judge-advocate.

"'His Excellency the Commander-in-chief having received intelligence that the enemy had moved out in full force from New York to Kingsbridge and towards the White Plains, and, during our deliberations on the points submitted by the foregoing state, a letter from Colonel Thomas Clarke, dated at Paramus the 31st ultimo, at seven o'clock, P. M., advising that the enemy were at Teller's Point with forty-two sail, six of which were very large, and a number of flat-boats, and that they had landed a party of men on the other side of the North River, and a party on this side of the Slote; we are of opinion, upon the question being propounded, that the situation of affairs renders it necessary to postpone the consideration of the matter so submitted to us, and that the meeting of the members nominated to compose the said court-martial be deferred, till the

Commander-in-chief shall judge the circumstances of the service will better admit it.'

"It is still a matter of greater concern, that it is impossible for me to fix the time when the court will sit, as it must depend on the enemy's operations. Whenever these will permit, you shall be informed, and of the day; and you may rest assured, that there shall be no delay, but such as proceeds from necessity and the exigency of the public service. I am, dear Sir, &c."

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"*Philadelphia, July 13th.* — Dear Sir; I have been anxiously waiting for a long time in expectation, that the situation of the army would admit the court-martial to proceed on my trial. As a part of the British army are gone down the North River, I hope the time is now arrived. If it can be done without prejudice to the service, I beg your Excellency to appoint as early a day as possible. The cruel situation I am in will apologize for my pressing the matter. My wounds are so far recovered, that I can walk with ease, and I expect soon to be able to ride on horseback. If there is no probability of the court's meeting soon, I must request the favor to know it, in which case I shall beg of Congress a few months' absence on my private affairs. I have the honor to be, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ARNOLD.

"*West Point, July 20th.* — Dear Sir; I have received your favor of the 13th instant. The situation of affairs would not permit a court-martial to sit, since you were at Middlebrook. You may be assured it is not my wish to delay your trial a single moment. At the same time you must be sensible, that I cannot fix with precision on any day, during the more active part of the campaign, for it to come on. The movements of the enemy will govern ours, and, if a day were proposed, a disappointment might take place, as it did before. If, however, there should be a time, when appearances promise that the enemy will remain inactive, I will appoint a day, of which you shall be notified. At present there is no such prospect. I am happy to hear, that your wounds are so far recovered; and I hope they will continue to mend, till you are perfectly well.

"I am, dear Sir, &c."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO PRESIDENT REED.

"*Morristown, December 4th.* — Sir; I have the honor to inform your Excellency and the Council, by the conveyance which now offers by express, that Monday the 20th instant is appointed for proceeding in the trial of Major-General Arnold. The court-martial will sit at the camp in the vicinity of Morristown. I have written to Mr. Matlack and informed him of these circumstances, and I request the favor of your Excellency to communicate notice of the same to any witnesses there may be besides. If there are any in the military line, and I am informed of them, I will order their attendance; or, if there are any under this description at or in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, who might possibly go from thence before they could receive my orders, Congress, I am persuaded, will, upon information of the fact, direct them to attend.

"I have the honor to be, &c."

The trial accordingly commenced at the time above appointed, and was closed on the 26th of January, 1780. The court acquitted General Arnold of two of the charges exhibited against him, and found him censurable as to the two others. While at Valley Forge, and when the enemy had possession of Philadelphia, he gave a passport to a vessel, containing American property, which was about to leave that city. This was one of the charges against him, and the court were of the opinion, that he had no right to give such a passport, and that it was a direct breach of one of the articles of war. Respecting the other charge, the court said; "It appears that General Arnold made application to the deputy quartermaster-general, to supply him with wagons to remove property then in imminent danger from the enemy; that wagons were supplied him by the deputy quartermaster-general on this application, which had been drawn from the State of Pennsylvania for the public service; and it also appears, that General Arnold intended this application as a private request, and that he had no design of employing the wagons otherwise than at his private expense, nor of defrauding the public, nor injuring or impeding the public service; but, considering the delicacy attending the high station in which the General acted, and that requests from him might operate as commands, they are of opinion, the request was imprudent and improper, and that, therefore, it ought not to have been made."

In consequence of the decision of the court respecting these two charges, they sentenced General Arnold to receive a reprimand from

the Commander-in-chief. The proceedings of the court-martial were published by order of Congress.

Whilst his trial was in suspense, General Arnold had many difficulties with committees of Congress, in regard to a settlement of his accounts. During his command in Canada he had, from the necessity of the case, frequently acted as commissary and quartermaster, and public money to a large amount had passed through his hands. From the peculiarity of his situation, it was not easy, perhaps not possible, to obtain vouchers for every transaction, or to keep the accounts methodically and exactly. At any rate, when he presented them to Congress, they were in so confused a state, and his own demands in certain charges were so extravagant and unwarrantable, that the committees who examined them, after making very indulgent allowances, reported large deductions. This enraged Arnold, as it not only diminished what he pretended to be the amount of his just claim, but implied a suspicion of his integrity. He protested against the decision of the committees, quarrelled with individual members, and manifested a degree of petulence and resentment, which contributed as little to confirm the confidence of his friends as to conciliate his opponents. On the 18th of February, 1780, he presented the following *Petition* to Congress.

"Your petitioner, in the month of April last, presented a petition to your honorable House, praying that he might be repaid in specie, for specie advanced in Canada, and for a vessel and cargo taken there by General Wooster for the public service, and that a reasonable allowance might be made to him for his table expenses when commanding in this city, which petition was referred to the honorable Treasury Board. Your petitioner begs leave to observe, that he presented his accounts and vouchers to the commissioners of the chamber of accounts, who having received instructions thereupon from the Treasury Board examined the same, and stated a general account, which, together with their report, was presented to your honorable House, which report refers to the decision of Congress the vessel and cargo and sundry other claims, upon which Congress were pleased to appoint a committee of their House to examine the same, and report thereon; all of which matters have been before said committee about five months, without any decision thereupon, owing to the members frequently changing. Your petitioner begs leave to observe, that he has paid near ten months' attendance on commissioners of accounts and committees of your honorable House to obtain a settlement of his public accounts; and, when he supposed them drawing near to a close, to his great surprise he finds that the

committee have reported to Congress, that their time and attention are engrossed by other matters, and that Congress have referred the accounts to the Treasury Board, and that of course they return into the hands of the commissioners of the chamber of accounts, who have already decided and given their opinion thereon, from which your petitioner has appealed to Congress.

"Your petitioner begs leave further to observe, that he conceives himself ill-treated by the commissioners of accounts, and that their report was partial, and dictated by private resentment, or undue influence, and that the said commissioners, with some of whom he has had several disputes, are now become parties in the matter, and by no means disinterested and proper persons to judge of his accounts and claims. Your petitioner conceives, that referring the accounts back to said commissioners is unprecedented, and going over the same ground again (they having already given their sentiments thereon), unless they are finally to determine thereon, which will preclude your petitioner from an appeal, and of course from justice. Your petitioner therefore prays Congress to recommit his accounts and claims, which he conceives will engross very little time of the committee to settle and report thereon, or that they may be referred to the honorable Treasury Board for them to decide thereupon."

This petition was little regarded. We find him three months afterwards still complaining of the decision of the Treasury Board, and requesting to be informed in what manner he could appeal from that Board to Congress. — *Journals, May 10th.* He was informed that he could state his objections in writing, and lay them before Congress. The members seem to have become as much wearied with his importunity, as they were distrustful of his rectitude. Whether entire justice was rendered to him, amidst so many obstacles to a perfect knowledge of the merits of his case, and to an unbiassed judgment, it would be difficult at this time to determine. For other remarks on the subject, see Austin's *Life of Gerry*, Vol. I. p. 356. Mr. Gerry was chairman of the Treasury Board.

No. V. p. 246.

LORD NORTH'S VIEWS AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE AMERICAN WAR.

History, and all the public documents and proceedings of Parliament during the administration of Lord North, concur in representing that minister, not only as an enemy to the claims and pretensions of the Americans, but as a constant and uncompromising advocate for the war. So strong has this impression been in America, that writers have uniformly ascribed the continuance of the war, after every reasonable prospect of success had vanished, mainly to the settled hostility and unyielding temper of Lord North. It is a curious fact, therefore, which has recently been established, that Lord North, during a great part of his administration, was in his heart averse to continuing the contest, that he often endeavoured to bring George the Third to concur in his sentiments, and to conciliate or treat with America; and that, above all, with that view he urged, though without success, a coalition with the public men, who had openly opposed the American war at its commencement, and were disposed to close it by conciliation or treaty.

This statement is confirmed by unquestionable testimony. After the death of Lord North, several letters and notes from the King to him while minister were found among his papers. These fell into the custody of his son-in-law, Douglas Lord Glenbervie, as executor either under his will or that of his son, George Lord Guilford. They were lent by Lord Glenbervie to Sir James Mackintosh, who made copious and judicious extracts from them, embracing various topics relative to the intercourse between the King and the minister. Since the death of Sir James Mackintosh, these extracts have been examined by Lord Holland, who has selected such parts from them as bear immediately on the point in question, and has obligingly permitted them to be published in this work. They are contained in the paper below, which is printed precisely as it came from the hands of Lord Holland.

It will be seen, that, with one or two exceptions, the quotations are from the King's own letters or notes, without the corresponding communications from Lord North, which either answered or gave occasion to them. The nature of Lord North's advice or representations, therefore, is only to be inferred from his royal correspondent's comments and replies. But the meaning is so obvious, and so

often repeated, as not to admit of doubt. "In corroboration of that inference," says Lord Holland, "I can without scruple affirm, that many of the leading characters of that day, both ministerial and those in the opposition, have assured me, that in well-informed society it was notorious, that it was indolent weakness and a sense of honor, and not defect of judgment or passion, that induced Lord North to remain minister so long, and to continue a war, of the success of which he despaired, and the principles of which he in his heart disapproved."

This fact, connected with the particulars in the following paper, is not more interesting in itself, than important as a key to the history of the time, and as affording the means of explaining the counsels and designs of the British King and ministry during the latter years of the American war.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF GEORGE THE THIRD TO LORD NORTH, SELECTED BY LORD HOLLAND FROM THE MANUSCRIPTS OF SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

1774. *September 11th.* — "The die is cast, the Colonies must either triumph or submit."

November 18th. — The New England governments are now in a state of rebellion. Blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent.

December 15th. — Dislikes Lord North's proposal of sending commissioners to America to inquire.

1775. — Sundry expressions in favor of coercive measures and rigor, and many assurances of perseverance, which prove the King's own determination, and imply by inference that he thought even at that time, that Lord North required exhortation to keep him steady in the pursuit of his object, the subjection of America. Throughout this year the King was confident of success, and urged Lord North not to relax his endeavours. On the *18th of August* blames him for delaying the Proclamation to declare Americans rebels, and forbids all intercourse with them. There are some expressions even in the correspondence of this year, that raise a fair inference of a wish in Lord North's mind to quit the ministry, or at least the first place in it. "As to your offer," says the King, in a letter of *November 7th*, "it is very handsome, but I can never consent to it." What the offer was, is not stated, but from the context there appears some arrangement, which would have removed him from his employment, "the profits and honor of which," his Majesty observes, "are in the best hands."

1776. — The same spirit pervades his correspondence, but there are few or no extracts distinctly marking any difference between the King and the minister.

1777. — His indignation with the Americans seemed to increase. He is unwilling to believe in France going to war, and presses for vigor in North America to deter her.

1778. — As early as January there are symptoms of Lord North hinting at some offer of peace, for the King says, "Nothing short of independency will be accepted. I do not think there is a man either bold or mad enough to treat for the mother country on such a basis. Perhaps the time will come, when it will be wise to abandon all America but Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas, but then the generality of the nation must see it first in that light; but to treat with Independents can never be possible."

1778. *January 31st.* — A direct answer to some letter of Lord North, expressing a wish to retire, in which the King, after appealing to Lord North's personal affection to him, and his sense of honor, and bestowing great praise upon him, goes on to say, "You must remember, that before the recess I strongly advised you not to bind yourself to bring forward any plan for restoring tranquillity to North America, *not from any absurd ideas of unconditional submission, which my mind never harboured,* but from foreseeing that whatever can be proposed will be liable not to bring America back to her attachment, but to dissatisfy this country, which so cheerfully and handsomely carries on the contest, and has a right to have the struggle continued till convinced that it is vain. Perhaps this is the minute, that you ought to be least in a hurry to produce a plan, from the probability of a declaration of war from France;" and again, "I do not mean to reject all ideas, if a foreign war should not arise this session, of laying a proposition before Parliament."

It is manifest from this letter that Lord North had proposed some overtures, or plan, for conciliation unpalatable to the King, which he was earnest at least to postpone; and it may be reasonably inferred from the words in italics, that Lord North in expressing his wish to retire had urged the impracticability of obtaining "unconditional submission," which he supposed, and probably with justice, to be the King's determined and sole object.

February 9th. — When war with France was inevitable, he was, consistently with the assurance at the end of his note of January 31st, anxious that Lord North "should *not* delay his proposition."

Early in March. — He had assented reluctantly to a sort of offer

to Lord Chatham (who had recently declared *against* the Independence of America) to join or support Lord North's administration, but positively objected to any application to help in forming an administration. "Should he wish to see me," says the King, "before he gives his answer, I shall most certainly refuse it."

March. — The King's correspondence, throughout the first week of this month, is full of protestations against coalitions and changes of ministry, so vehement and so frequent that they prove Lord North to have urged them earnestly and repeatedly. "He would run any *personal* risk rather than submit to opposition." "He is grieved at Lord North's recurring to the painful subject." "He will rather risk his crown than do what is disgraceful." "If the nation will not stand by him, they shall have another King, for he never will put his hand to what will make him miserable to the last hour of his life." "To give Lord North ease, he will accept of the services of those men in his ministry; but rather than be shackled by those desperate men he would lose his crown, and not wear it as a disgrace."

March 22d. — Calls on Lord North to answer a plain question, — "Is he resolved at the hour of danger to desert him?"

March 23d. — Is satisfied with Lord North's answer, and always thought "his sense of honor must prevent him from deserting."

March 26th. — Seems to be brought to some disposition to accommodate matters through the commissioners with America, and to close the war with that country.

March 29th, 30th. — Lord North seems actually to have declined continuing minister further than to close the then existing session, or as long as might be necessary to make arrangements; and the King insists on Thurlow being immediately made Chancellor.

From March to May. — Lord North considered himself as merely holding his office till the session was closed, and his successor appointed; but in May the King earnestly urged him to continue, and prevailed. The King says, on the *5th of May*, "Remember the last words you used, 'You did not mean to resign';" but Lord North reverts to his intention of resigning almost immediately afterwards, and the King writes many remonstrances, and shows great soreness and irritability.

June 16th. — Lord North applies to resign, two days before the prorogation.

In the summer recess, *July*, Lord North seems to have hinted at negotiation for peace; for the King urges the necessity of war,

but protests his readiness "to sheathe the sword when permanent tranquillity can be obtained."

In the Autumn. — "If ministers show that they never will consent to the independence of America, and that the assistance of every man will be accepted on that ground, I am certain the cry will be strong in their favor." In the same letter he remarks, that "if any one branch of the empire is allowed to throw off its dependency, the others will infallibly follow the example."

1779. — He again empowers Lord North to accept services, but does not wish any change in the treasury; and stipulates, in offering the admiralty to Lord Howe, that he shall concur in prosecuting *war in all the quarters of the globe.*

June. — "No man in my dominions desires *solid* peace more than I do. But no inclination to get out of the present difficulties, which certainly keep my mind very far from a state of ease, can incline me to *enter into the destruction of the empire.* Lord North FREQUENTLY says, that the advantages to be gained by this contest never can repay the *expense.* I own that in any war, be it ever so successful, if persons will sit down and weigh the *expense,* they will find as in the last, that it has impoverished the state enriched; but this is only weighing such events in the scale of a tradesman behind his counter. It is necessary for those, whom Providence has placed in my station, to weigh whether *expenses,* though very great, are not sometimes necessary to prevent what would be more ruinous than any loss of money. The present contest with America I cannot help seeing as the most serious in which this country was ever engaged. It contains such a train of consequences, as must be examined to feel its real weight. Whether the laying a tax was deserving all the evils, that have arisen from it, I suppose no man could allege without being thought more fit for Bedlam than a seat in the senate; but step by step the demands of America have risen. Independence is their object, which every man not willing to sacrifice every object to a *momentary and inglorious* peace must concur *with me* in thinking this country *can never submit to.* Should America succeed in that, the West Indies must follow not in independence, but dependence on America. Ireland would soon follow, and this island reduce itself to a poor island indeed." Throughout the summer the King continued to write to his minister, strongly deprecating the admission of any man into office, who was inclined to acknowledge the independence of America, or treat with those who look to independence; and,

June 22d — He says, "What I said yesterday was the dictate

of frequent and severe self-examination. *I never can depart from it. Before I will hear of any man's readiness to come into office,* I shall expect to see it *signed under his own hand,* that he is resolved *to keep the empire entire,* and that no troops shall consequently be withdrawn from thence, nor independence ever allowed."

November 30th. — He tells Lord North, that "if he is resolved to retire he must understand that step, though thought necessary by Lord North, is very unpleasant to me."

December. — He authorizes Lord Thurlow to attempt a coalition, promising "to blot from his remembrance any events, that may have displeased him," provided it is understood by those, who join with part of his present ministry in forming a more extended one, that "every means *are to be employed to keep the empire entire,* to prosecute the present just and unprovoked war in all its branches with the utmost vigor, and that past measures be treated with proper respect."

Though, according to Lord Thurlow's representation of the matter, no *proposal* was ever made to the persons in opposition, he felt the pulse of some leading men, and as they seemed disinclined to engage for themselves, and still more for others, to the extent of the King's suggestion, his Majesty remarks with some asperity, "I see what treatment I am to expect if I call them into my service. To obtain their support I must *deliver up* my *person,* my *principles,* and my *dominions* into their hands."

1780. *March 7th.* — In answer pretty evidently to a hint about American independence; "I can never suppose this country so far lost to all ideas of self-importance, as to be willing to grant American independence. If that could be ever universally adopted, I shall despair of this country being preserved from a state of inferiority. I hope never to live to see that day, for, however I am treated, I must love this country."

May 19th. — Earnestly exhorts Lord North not to retire.

July. — To something like a direct proposition from opposition, through Mr. Frederic Montague, he replies, "that an evasive *answer* about America will by no means answer," and that the second proposition leaving the question open is "therefore quite inadmissible."

September or October. — Lord Gower begs to resign, and urges a coalition with some in opposition. Lord North combats his intention, and thinks his resignation would be the ruin of the administration, but he owns, that in the argument "he had one disadvantage, which is that he holds in his heart, and has held *for three years* past, the same opinion with Lord Gower."

1781. *December.* — The King disclaims any change in his sentiments, as "to getting a peace at the *expense* of a separation from America, which *no difficulties* can get me to consent to do."

1782. *March 17th.* — After Conway's motion was carried, he says, "I am resolved not to throw myself into the hands of opposition at all events, and shall certainly, if things go as they seem to tend, know what my conscience as well as honor dictates, as the only way left for me."

March 19th. — He says, "He could not but be hurt at Lord North's letter of last night. Every man must be the sole judge of his feelings; therefore *whatever you or any man can say has no avail with me.*" In the course of two or three days, however, he speaks of "*those who are to form an administration,*" and, on the *27th of March*, he writes a letter of strong emotion, and some affection, to Lord North, announcing that "the fatal day is come," and bitterly complaining of the terms imposed upon him.

1783. *After the Peace.* — His language proves, that his feelings about America were not altered, though circumstances constrained him to change his conduct.

No. VI. p. 303.

STORMING OF STONY POINT.

GENERAL WAYNE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Stony Point, two o'clock, A. M., 16 July, 1779.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"The fort and garrison, with Colonel Johnson, are ours. Our officers and men behaved like men who are determined to be free.

"Yours, most sincerely,

"ANTHONY WAYNE."

"Stony Point, 17 July, 1779.

"SIR,

"I have the honor to give you a full and particular relation of the reduction of this Point, by the light infantry under my command.

"On the 15th instant at twelve o'clock we took up our line of march from Sandy Beach, distant fourteen miles from this place;

the roads being exceedingly bad and narrow, and having to pass over high mountains, through deep morasses and difficult defiles, we were obliged to move in single files the greatest part of the way. At eight o'clock in the evening the van arrived at Mr. Springsteel's, within one mile and a half of the enemy, and formed into columns as fast as they came up, agreeably to the order of battle annexed; namely, Colonels Febiger's and Meigs's regiments, with Major Hull's detachment, formed the right column; Colonel Butler's regiment and Major Murfey's two companies the left. The troops remained in this position until several of the principal officers with myself had returned from reconnoitring the works. At half after eleven o'clock, being the hour fixed on, the whole moved forward. The van of the right consisted of one hundred and fifty volunteers, properly officered, who advanced with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury; these were preceded by twenty picked men, and a vigilant and brave officer to remove the *abatis* and other obstructions. The van of the left consisted of one hundred volunteers, under the command of Major Stewart, with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets, also preceded by a brave and determined officer, with twenty men, for the same purpose as the other.

"At twelve o'clock the assault was to begin on the right and left flanks of the enemy's works, whilst Major Murfey amused them in front; but a deep morass covering their whole front, and at this time overflowed by the tide, together with other obstructions, rendered the approaches more difficult than was at first apprehended, so that it was about twenty minutes after twelve before the assault began; previously to which I placed myself at the head of Febiger's regiment, or the right column, and gave the troops the most pointed orders not to fire on any account, but place their whole dependence on the bayonet, which order was literally and faithfully obeyed. Neither the deep morass, the formidable and double rows of *abatis*, nor the strong works in front and flank, could damp the ardor of the troops, who, in the face of a most tremendous and incessant fire of musketry, and from cannon loaded with grape-shot, forced their way at the point of the bayonet through every obstacle, both columns meeting in the centre of the enemy's works nearly at the same instant. Too much praise cannot be given to Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury (who struck the enemy's standard with his own hand), and to Major Stewart, who commanded the advanced parties, for their brave and prudent conduct.

"Colonels Butler, Meigs, and Febiger conducted themselves with

that coolness, bravery, and perseverance, that will ever insure success. Lieutenant-Colonel Hay was wounded in the thigh, bravely fighting at the head of his battalion. I should take up too much of your Excellency's time, were I to particularize every individual who deserves it for his bravery on this occasion. I cannot, however, omit Major Lee, to whom I am indebted for frequent and very useful intelligence, which contributed much to the success of the enterprise; and it is with the greatest pleasure I acknowledge to you, that I was supported in the attack by all the officers and soldiers under my command, to the utmost of my wishes. The officers and privates of the artillery exerted themselves in turning the cannon against Verplanck's Point, and forced the enemy to cut the cables of their shipping, and run down the river.

"I should be wanting in gratitude were I to omit mentioning Captain Fishbourn and Mr. Archer, my two aids-de-camp, who on every occasion showed the greatest intrepidity, and supported me into the works after I received my wound in passing the last *abatis*.

"Enclosed are the returns of the killed and wounded of the light infantry, as also of the enemy, together with the number of prisoners taken, likewise of the ordnance and stores found in the garrison.

"I forgot to inform your Excellency, that previously to my marching, I had drawn General Muhlenberg into my rear, who, with three hundred men of his brigade, took post on the opposite side of the marsh, so as to be in readiness either to support me, or to cover a retreat in case of accident; and I have no doubt of his faithfully and effectually executing either, had there been any occasion for him.

"The humanity of our brave soldiery, who scorned to take the lives of a vanquished foe calling for mercy, reflects the highest honor on them, and accounts for the few of the enemy killed on the occasion.

"I am not satisfied with the manner in which I have mentioned the conduct of Lieutenants Gibbons and Knox, the two gentlemen who led the advanced parties of twenty men each. Their distinguished bravery deserves the highest commendation. The former belongs to the sixth Pennsylvania regiment, and lost seventeen men killed and wounded in the attack; the latter belongs to the ninth Pennsylvania regiment, and was more fortunate in saving his men, though not less exposed. I have the honor to be, &c.

"ANTHONY WAYNE."

The number of prisoners taken in the fort was *five hundred and forty-three*. By General Wayne's return the number of killed was

sixty-three. In Colonel Johnson's official account of the transaction, his loss in killed is stated to have been only twenty. It is not easy to reconcile this discrepancy. The assailing party had fifteen killed and eighty-three wounded.

Congress passed resolves highly complimentary to the officers and privates engaged in this enterprise, and confirming the promise of reward, which had been previously made by General Wayne; and also directing the value of all the military stores taken at Stony Point to be ascertained and divided among the troops, who were engaged in storming the fort.

The rewards were as follows; to the first man, who entered the enemy's works, five hundred dollars; to the second, four hundred dollars; to the third, three hundred; to the fourth, two hundred; to the fifth, one hundred; being fifteen hundred dollars in the whole. The ordnance and other stores were estimated at one hundred and fifty-eight thousand six hundred and forty dollars; which amount was divided among the troops in proportion to the pay of the officers and men.

Three different medals, emblematical of the action, were struck by order of Congress, bearing the names respectively of Wayne, Fleury, and Stewart. These medals are described in the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 301–303.

No. VII. p. 365.

SUBSTANCE OF A CONFERENCE BETWEEN GENERAL WASHINGTON AND THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

West Point, 16 September, 1779.

The Minister opened the conference by observing, that the Council of Massachusetts had represented to him the disadvantages, which their commerce was likely to suffer from the late misfortune in Penobscot, and the advantages which would result if Count d'Estaing could detach a few ships of the line and frigates to be stationed upon their coast, for protecting their commerce and countenancing the operations of their cruisers against that of the enemy. But, before he should propose such a measure to Count d'Estaing, he wished to know from the General, what purposes the detachment would answer to his military operations, and whether it would enable

him to prosecute any offensive enterprise against the enemy. That if he could accompany the request of the Council with assurances of this kind, a motive of such importance would have the greatest influence in determining the concurrence of Count d'Estaing, and might the better justify him in deranging or contracting his plans in the West Indies, by making a detachment of his force.

The General answered, that if Count d'Estaing could spare a detachment superior to the enemy's naval force upon this continent, retaining such a force in the West Indies, as would put it out of the enemy's power to detach an equal force to this continent without leaving themselves inferior in the Islands, the measure would have a high probability of effecting many important and perhaps decisive advantages; but these would depend upon several contingencies, such as the time in which the detachment can arrive, and the position and force of the enemy when it arrives; that the season proper for military operations was now pretty far advanced, and to make a winter campaign would require a disposition of our magazines peculiar to it, which could not be made without a large increase of expense, a circumstance not to be desired in the present posture of our affairs, unless the arrival of a naval succour was an event of some certainty; that, with respect to the position and force of the enemy, they had now about fourteen thousand men at New York and its dependencies, and between three and four thousand at Rhode Island; that to reduce the former, if it should be concentred on the Island, would require extensive preparations beforehand, both as to magazines and aids of men, which could not with propriety be undertaken on a precarious expectation of assistance; but that, if the garrison of Rhode Island should continue there, we should have every reason to expect its reduction in a combined operation; it might however be withdrawn. He added, that the enemy appeared to be making large detachments from New York, which the present situation of their affairs seems to exact; that there is a high probability of their being left so weak, as to give us an opportunity, during the winter, of acting effectually against New York, in case of the arrival of a fleet to coöperate with us, even with the force we now have and could suddenly assemble on an emergency; that at all events the French squadron would be able to strike an important stroke, in the capture and destruction of the enemy's vessels of war, with a large number of transports, and perhaps seamen.

He concluded with observing, that, though in the great uncertainty of the arrival of a squadron, he could not undertake to make expensive preparations for coöperating, nor pledge himself for doing it

effectually, yet there was the greatest prospect of utility from the arrival of such a squadron, and he would engage to do every thing in his power for improving its aid, if it should appear upon our coast; that, if the present or future circumstances should permit Count d'Estaing to concert a combined operation with the troops of these States against the enemy's fleets and armies within these States, he would be ready to promote the measure to the utmost of our resources, and should have the highest hopes of its success. To prevent delay, and give efficacy to the project, it would be necessary, however, that he should have some previous notice.

The Minister replied, that the General's delicacy upon the occasion was very proper; but, as he seemed unwilling to give assurances of effectual coöperation, in conveying the application to the Admiral, he would only make use of the name of the Council, which would no doubt have all the weight due to the application of so respectable a body. The General assented, observing, that occasional mention might be made of the military advantages to be expected from the measure.

The Minister in the next place informed the General, that there had been some negotiations between Congress and Monsieur Gerard, on the subject of the Floridas and the limits of the Spanish dominions in that quarter, concerning which certain resolutions had been taken by Congress, which he supposed were known to the General. He added, that the Spaniards had in contemplation an expedition against the Floridas, which was already either begun or very soon would be begun, and he wished to know the General's opinion of a coöperation on our part; that it was probable this expedition would immediately divert the enemy's force from South Carolina and Georgia, and the question then would be, whether General Lincoln's army would be necessary elsewhere, or might be employed in a coöperation with the Spanish forces; that the motive with the French court for wishing such a coöperation was, that it would be a meritorious act on the side of the United States towards Spain, who, though she had all along been well disposed to the revolution, had entered reluctantly into the war, and had not yet acknowledged our independence; that a step of this kind would serve to confirm her good dispositions, and to induce her not only to enter into a treaty with us, but perhaps to assist with a loan of money; that the forces of Spain in the Islands were so considerable as in all appearance would make our aid unnecessary; on which account the utility of it, only contingent and possible, was but a secondary consideration with the court of France; the desire to engage Spain more firmly

in our interests, by a mark of our good will to her, was the leading and principal one.

The General answered the Minister, that he had the deepest sense of the friendship of France, but replied to the matter in question, that he was altogether a stranger to the measures adopted by Congress relative to the Floridas, and could give no opinion of the propriety of the coöperation proposed, in a civil or political light; but, considering it merely as a military question, he saw no objection to the measure, on the supposition that the enemy's force in Georgia and South Carolina be withdrawn, without which it would of course be impossible.

The minister then asked, in case the operation by the Spaniards against the Floridas should not induce the English to abandon the southern States, whether it would be agreeable that the forces either French or Spanish employed there should coöperate with our troops against those of the enemy in Georgia and South Carolina. The General replied, that he imagined such a coöperation would be desirable. The Minister inquired, in the next place, whether, in case the court of France should find it convenient to send directly from France a squadron and a few regiments attached to it, to act in conjunction with us in this quarter, it would be agreeable to the United States. The General thought it would be very promotive of the common cause.

The Minister said, that Dr. Franklin had purchased a fifty-gun ship, which the King of France intended to equip for the benefit of the United States, to be sent with two or three frigates to Newfoundland to act against the enemy's vessels employed in the fishery, and afterwards to proceed to Boston to cruise from that port.

He concluded the conference with stating, that in Boston several gentlemen of influence, some of them members of Congress, had conversed with him on the subject of an expedition against Canada and Nova Scotia; that his Most Christian Majesty had a sincere desire to see those two provinces annexed to the American confederacy, and would be disposed to promote a plan for this purpose; but that he would undertake nothing of the kind, unless the plan was previously approved and digested by the General. He added that a letter from the General to Congress some time since on the subject of an expedition to Canada had appeared in France, and had been submitted to the best military judges, who approved the reasoning, and thought the objections to the plan, which had been proposed, very plausible and powerful; that, whenever the General should think the circumstances of this country favorable to such an undertaking, he should

be very glad to recommend the plan he should propose, and he was assured, that the French court would give it all the aid in their power.*

The General again expressed his sense of the good dispositions of his Most Christian Majesty; but observed, that, while the enemy remain in force in these States, the difficulties stated in his letter alluded to by the Minister would still subsist; but that whenever that force should be removed he doubted not it would be a leading object with the government to wrest the two forementioned provinces from the power of Britain; that in this case he should esteem himself honored in being consulted on the plan, and was of opinion, that, though we should have land force enough for the undertaking, without in this respect intruding upon the generosity of our allies, a naval cooöperation would certainly be very useful and necessary.

The rest of the conference consisted in mutual assurances of friendship of the two countries, interspersed, on the General's side, with occasional remarks on the importance of removing the war from these States, as it would enable us to afford ample supplies to the operations in the West Indies, and to act with efficacy in annoying the commerce of the enemy, and dispossessing them of their dominions on this continent.

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* There must either have been a misconception here, as to the exact meaning of the French minister, whose sentiments were communicated through an interpreter, or the minister himself must have held out encouragements, which he did not expect to be called on to make good by any positive act. It is certain that M. Gerard, who was still in America, had been expressly instructed not to aid or countenance any project for conquering Canada. He was directed not to oppose such an attempt, should the Americans persist in it, but at the same time to avoid giving the least hope of aid from France. It was the policy of the French court, whatever may have been the reasons, that Canada should remain in the possession of Great Britain after the peace.

No. VIII. p. 368.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE ON AMERICAN AFFAIRS, AFTER HIS FIRST RETURN FROM AMERICA.

As soon as Lafayette arrived in France he proceeded immediately to Versailles, where he found his wife and family. His father-in-law went to see M. Maurepas, the minister, and inquired if Lafayette would be admitted at court. Maurepas told him that he should himself be glad to see Lafayette privately, and converse with him, but that he must not appear openly at Versailles, till the King's pleasure should be signified; that Lafayette had committed an offence by his disobedience of orders, and his bold manner of writing before his departure; and that he must go into exile for a certain period of time. He was accordingly exiled to the Hôtel de Noailles in Paris for the term of eight days, and forbidden to go abroad, or to be seen except by the family. It was known, however, that he was in Versailles, and the Queen was resolved to see him before he went into exile. For this purpose it was contrived, that Lafayette should be walking in the grounds attached to the palace when she rode out. In compliance with the sentence of banishment he retired to the Hôtel de Noailles, whence he wrote as follows to Count de Vergennes.

LAFAYETTE TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Paris, 14 February, 1779.

"SIR,

"A desire to render an exact obedience to the orders of the King impels me to take the liberty of importuning you to let me know what my duty is. The prohibition, which M. de Noailles has put upon me, makes no exception as to one, whom I do not think, nevertheless, I should be forbidden to visit. Dr. Franklin was to have met me at Versailles this morning, if I had been there, to communicate to me some affairs of importance, as he said. I have informed him of the cause, that detained me at Paris. But I did not think I ought to refuse an interview, which might not be wholly useless to the King's interests. He is coming to-morrow morning, and I trust you will add to your kindnesses that of directing me how to conduct myself in this matter.

"Suffer me, Sir, to inform you that I have heard many persons speak of an expedition, somewhat resembling the one proposed by

Congress. I flatter myself I am too well known by you to have it suspected of me, that any tie of kindred or friendship could make me forget the profound secrecy which is due to affairs of state. I have added to nature some acquired skill in this particular. My sole reason for mentioning the subject, therefore, is to add, that the indiscretion of some of the members of Congress, and the number of the officers returning from America, will always spread rumors, which it will be impossible to suppress. Truth will remain hidden by being lost in a mass of false reports. Hence caution is necessary to preserve our secrets from all the inconveniences to which they are subject in America, both from the form of the government and from the character of a part of those at the head of affairs. I have the honor to be with profound respect, &c."

Although he was confined to the Hôtel, his exile could scarcely be considered a hardship. Many persons came to see him under pretence of calling on the family. The eight days being expired, he was admitted to an audience by the King, and was very graciously received. After such a censure for his disobedience, as would satisfy the demands of royal dignity, the King conversed much with him on the state of affairs in America, and complimented him on the success that had attended him, and the good name he had acquired during his absence.

About six weeks after his arrival in France, Lafayette planned an expedition, in which he was to act in concert with Paul Jones, and which was approved by the government. An attack was to be made on the west coast of England with fifteen hundred men, and two or three frigates under the American flag. The object was to levy contributions on Bristol, Liverpool, and other large towns, and send the money to the United States for the service of the government. These mercantile towns were extremely hostile to the claims of America, because it was supposed the independence of the colonies would be injurious to their commerce. Lafayette was to command the land forces, and Paul Jones the frigates. The scheme was arranged, the troops were assembled, and the vessels nearly equipped, when the expedition was suddenly laid aside by the French government, in consequence of another which was to act on a larger scale.* A combined attack on England by French and Spanish forces was meditated. Lafayette's plan was of course absorbed in this, but he

* Concerning this first project, see a letter from Dr. Franklin, and another from Lafayette to Paul Jones, in *Franklin's Familiar Letters*, pp. 166, 168; also *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 83.

was to have an important command in the combined expedition. He remained at Havre for a considerable time, waiting the results of these new schemes; but they all failed at last on account of the dilatoriness of Spain in getting ready. The English became apprized of the design, and were prepared for it, which, with other circumstances, induced the government to abandon the enterprise. Paul Jones went to sea, however, in the ships that were prepared for the expedition first projected by Lafayette, and fought the celebrated action between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis. The following letters will show what part was taken by Lafayette in the concerns of America, while the abovementioned operations were in progress.

LAFAYETTE TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Paris, May, 1779.

"SIR,

"Allow me the honor of proposing to you a plan, the success of which, uncertain as it now is, will depend perhaps upon your approbation. As our means of attack or defence depend on our maritime force, would it not be doing a service to the common cause to increase for a time that of our allies? To purchase vessels would be too expensive for a nation so destitute of money. It would answer all purposes to hire them, and would enable us to make such diversions, or to undertake such operations, as might be esteemed necessary.

"Do you not think, Sir, if the King of Sweden would loan to America four ships of the line, with half of their crews, and the United States would engage to return them in a year upon certain conditions, that the step would be advantageous for us? The vessels might come to us under the Swedish flag. France need not be implicated at all. We could supply them in part, provide them with officers in blue, and send them out under the American flag. It would only be necessary to know, whether France would engage to be responsible for the loan of such a sum, and would help to complete the equipment. Even if the first part should meet with obstacles, the government might pledge itself only in case my fortune was exceeded.

"I have not as yet spoken to Dr. Franklin about this scheme, but I have sounded the Swedish ambassador very much to my satisfaction. He asked me for a letter, directed to him, which might be sent to his King; and, since I saw this important project might result in something advantageous, I was constrained to confide it to

you, and ask your opinion. The Swedish ambassador says the vessels may be here in two months and a half; consequently, including the rest of the fleet, the whole might be on the voyage in the month of August, and arrive at Rhode Island, Bermuda, or somewhere else in America, as soon as the month of October, which would be in good season.

"It will be necessary for Dr. Franklin to send a trustworthy man, or, what would be better, for you to send one, upon whom he might depend. The proposed engagement requires some promise, and especially some hope, that commerce will diminish the expense, that must be incurred. Inform me, Sir, I pray you, whether this little romantic scheme has any difficulties, and whether I am to prosecute or resign my proposition. I am, &c."

LAFAYETTE TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"St. Jean d'Angely, 1 June, 1779.

"SIR,

"I learnt before I left Paris, that a loan, negotiating in Holland for England, and which was to have been completed the coming autumn, would be stopped, because the lenders had demanded one per cent more interest. This loan was undertaken by a banker of English origin, who had apportioned it among a great many persons, and had become lender-general to the English government. I am told that some profits over and above the commission might help America to this sum, amounting to above forty millions.* I communicated this information to the Chevalier de la Luzerne to be imparted to you; but, having discharged that duty towards the Americans, I feared lest M. Necker would not share in my earnestness. I have already appropriated twenty millions to bank stock, ten to an expedition, and ten to pay the interest until the final reimbursement.

"I received at the moment I was coming away a letter from America, dated in the month of January, in which the President informed me in behalf of Congress, that they had changed their determination respecting the joint expedition to Canada. The reasons assigned are, the slight probability of Rhode Island and New York being evacuated next winter, the uncertainty of the enemy's movements next spring, and therefore the impossibility of promising their quota of the troops, fixed in the plan that I was intrusted with.

"I have the honor to be, &c."

* The denomination of the money is not mentioned, but it was doubtless livres.

LAFAYETTE TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

"St. Jean d'Angely, 12 June, 1779.

"SIR,

"There is no pleasure to be enjoyed, which could equal that of finding myself again among the free and liberal people, by whose affection and confidence I have been so highly honored, and of fighting again with those brother soldiers, to whom I am so much indebted. But Congress know, that former plans have been altered by themselves, and that others have been thought impossible, as they were suggested too late in the year. I will therefore make use of the leave of absence they were pleased to grant me, and serve the common cause among my countrymen, their allies, till fortunate circumstances may conduct me to the American shores in such a way, as will make that return more useful to the United States. The affairs of America I shall ever look upon as my first business while I am in Europe. Any confidence from the King and ministers, any popularity I may have with my countrymen, every means in my power, shall, to the best of my skill and till the end of my life, be exerted in behalf of an interest I have so much at heart. What I have hitherto done or said relating to America, I think needless to mention, as my ardent zeal is I hope well known to Congress; but I wish to let them know, that if in my proposals, in my repeated and warm applications for ships, money, or support of any kind, I have found the ministry not always so much in earnest as I was myself, it must be ascribed to their natural fears of inconveniences, which might arise to both nations, or to their conviction that such a thing was impossible for the present; but I never could question their good will towards America. In case Congress believe my influence may in any way serve them, I wish they would direct such orders to me, that I can the more certainly and properly employ the knowledge I have of this court and country for obtaining a success, in which my heart is so deeply interested.

"Dr. Franklin will no doubt inform you of the situation of Europe, and the state of affairs. The Chevalier de la Luzerne will also add intelligence, which will be intrusted to him at the time of his departure. By Dr. Franklin you will learn what has been said or thought on the subject of finance. Germany, Prussia, Turkey, and Russia have made such a peace as the French have desired. All the northern kingdoms, and the Dutch themselves, seem rather disgusted with English pride and vexations. They have put themselves in a situation to protect their trade with France. Irish intel-

ligence you will be made particularly acquainted with. What concerns Spain will also be laid before you; so that I have nothing to add, but to tell you that our affairs seem going very fast towards a speedy and honorable end.

"Since we have taken Senegal, I do not know of any military event, which I can mention. There has been a privateering expedition against Jersey Island, which was stopped by the difficulty of getting ashore. That little attempt, made by some few private volunteers, England honored with the name of a public French expedition, and employed there very unwisely Admiral Arbuthnot, which will cause a delay of his expected departure. Congress will hear of an enterprise against Liverpool, and other parts of the English coast, where French troops were to be shown under American colors, which, on account of raising contributions, my concern for American finances had brought into my head. But the plan was afterwards reduced to so small a scale, that it was thought the command would not suit me, and the expedition itself has been delayed, till more important operations take its place.

"Happy in the sight of my friends and family, after I was by your attentive goodness safely brought again to my native shores, I met with such an honorable reception, with such kind sentiments, as by far exceeded any wishes I had dared to conceive. For the inexpressible satisfaction, which the good will of my countrymen towards me affords to my heart, I am indebted to their ardent love for America, for the cause of freedom and its defenders, and to the idea they entertain, that I have had the happiness to serve the United States. To the same motives, and to the letter Congress was pleased to write on my account, I owe the many favors the King has conferred upon me. No time was lost in appointing me to the command of a regiment of dragoons. I have been for some days in this small town, near Rochefort harbour, where I have joined the King's regiment, and where other troops, whom I for the present command, are stationed; but I hope before long to leave this place, and take a more active part, and come nearer the common enemy. Before my departure from Paris, I sent to the minister of foreign affairs, who by the by is one of our best friends, some intelligence concerning a loan in Holland, which I want France to make, or answer for, in behalf of America; but I have not yet heard any thing on that head.

"Let me finish this letter by begging, that you will present to the Congress of the United States the tribute of the highest respect and most sincere gratitude, which I shall profess and duly feel towards them till the last moment of my life. I am, &c."

LAFAYETTE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"St. Jean d'Angely, 12 June, 1779.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"There is at length a safe occasion of writing to you, and of assuring you what sincere concern I feel at our separation. I had acquired such a habit of being inseparable from you, that I am more and more afflicted at the distance, which keeps me so far from my dearest friend, and especially at this particular time, as I think the campaign is opened, and that you are in the field. I ardently wish I might be near you, know every interesting event, and if possible contribute to your success and glory.

"Enclosed is a copy of my letter to Congress, in which you will find such intelligence as I was to give them. The Chevalier de la Luzerne intends going to Congress by the way of head-quarters. I promised that I would introduce him to your Excellency, and I have desired him to let you know any piece of news, which he has been intrusted with. By what you will hear, my dear General, you will see that our affairs take a good turn. Besides the favorable dispositions of Spain, Ireland is a good deal tired of English oppression. In confidence I would tell you, that the scheme of my heart would be to make it as free and independent as America. God grant that the sun of freedom may at length arise for the happiness of mankind. I shall know more about Ireland in a few weeks, and I will immediately inform your Excellency. As to Congress, there are so many people in it, that one cannot safely unbosom himself, as he does to his best friend. After referring you to the Chevalier de la Luzerne for what concerns the public news, the present situation of affairs, and the designs of our ministry, I will only speak to your Excellency about the great article of money. It gave me much trouble, and I so much insisted upon it, that the director of finances looks upon me as his evil genius. France has incurred great expenses lately. The Spaniards will not easily give their dollars. However, Dr. Franklin has got some money to pay the bills of Congress, and I hope I shall determine the government to greater sacrifices. Serving America is to my heart an inexpressible happiness.

"There is another point upon which you should employ all your influence and popularity. For God's sake prevent the Congress from disputing loudly together. Nothing so much hurts the interests and reputation of America, as these intestine quarrels. On the other hand, there are two parties in France; Mr. Adams and Mr. Lee on

one part; Dr. Franklin and his friends on the other. So great is the concern, which these divisions give me, that I cannot wait on these gentlemen as much as I could wish, for fear of mentioning disputes, and bringing them to a greater height.

"I send enclosed a small note for M. Neuville. Give me leave to recommend to your Excellency the bearer thereof, our new minister plenipotentiary, who seems to me extremely well qualified for deserving general esteem and regard.

"I know you wish to hear something about my private affairs. I gave an account of them to Congress, and shall only add, that I am here as happy as possible. My family, my friends, my countrymen, gave me such a reception, and show me every day such an affection, as I could not have hoped. For some days I have been in this place, where are the King's own regiment of dragoons, which I command, and some regiments of infantry, which are for the present under my orders. But what I want, my dear General, and what would make me the happiest of men, is to join again the American colors, or to put under your orders a division of four or five thousand of my countrymen. In case any such cooperation, or any private expedition is wished for, I think, if peace is not settled this winter, that an early demand might be complied with for the next campaign. Our ministers are rather slow in their operations, and have a great desire for peace, provided it is an honorable one; so that I think America must show herself in earnest for war, till such conditions are obtained. American independence is a certain, an undoubted point; but I wish that independence to be acknowledged on advantageous terms. On the whole, between ourselves, as to what concerns the royal and ministerial good will towards America, I, an American citizen, am fully satisfied with it, and I am sure the alliance and friendship between both nations will be established in such a way as will last for ever.

"Be so kind as to present my respects to your lady, and tell her how happy I should feel to present them myself, and at her own house. I have a wife, my dear General, who is in love with you, and affection for you seems to me so well justified, that I cannot oppose that sentiment in her. She begs you will receive her compliments, and make them acceptable to Mrs. Washington. I hope you will come to see us in Europe; and most certainly I give you my word, that, if I am not happy enough to be sent to America before the peace, I shall by all means go there as soon as I can escape. I beg you will present my best compliments to your family,

and remind them of my tender regard for them all; and also to the general officers, to all the officers of the army, and to all the friends I have there. I entreat you to let me hear from you. Write to me how you do, and how things are going on. The minutest details will be interesting to me. Do not forget any thing concerning yourself. With the highest respect and the most sincere friendship, I have the honor to be, &c."

LAFAYETTE TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Havre, 9 July, 1779.

"SIR,

"If my letter from America had contained any interesting information, I should not have delayed a moment to acquaint you with it; but it is only a confirmation of what you heard, and we have some later news by the way of England. It will be injurious to commerce for the British to have the command of James River; and while they can coast along those shores with impunity, their transient descents will almost always succeed. If they should establish themselves in their new possessions, to drive them out would be the more accordant to the plan I spoke to you about; as, in Virginia, November and even December are good campaigning months. The arrival of M. Gerard will certainly supply you with many details of American affairs. The Swedish ambassador has sent me, in the name of his King, the most flattering assurances, and well suited to awaken my gratitude; but the vessels are not forthcoming, and if we go to America we must go under the Spanish or French flag. I think if our southern allies should engage alone in a similar expedition, they would do more harm than good by it.

"I wish I could send you news that the English fleet was beaten in good earnest; and whilst I await that event with as much interest, as if I was at the head of the fleet, the army, and the whole ministry, I do not forget that your time is precious, and so I shall content myself with presenting to you the homage of my respect and my attachment."

LAFAYETTE TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

"Havre, 7 October, 1779.

"SIR,

"As from their minister in France any European intelligence will be properly conveyed to Congress, I beg leave only to pay them the due tribute of my respect, and a heartfelt assurance of my unbounded zeal, love, and gratitude. So sensible am I of their

goodness towards me, that I flatter myself they will kindly receive this letter from one, who will ever boast of the name of an American soldier, and whose delight it has been to share the same fortune as the American people, and never to be considered but as a countrymen of theirs.

"Since I had the honor of writing to your Excellency, I have ever been with Count de Vaux's army, which was divided into two corps at St. Malo and Havre, and consisted of three thousand men. Another body has been stationed in Flanders, and two thousand dragoons are to embark at Brest. The project of invading England was at first retarded by the difficulty of effecting a union of the French and Spanish fleets, on account of contrary winds, by unavailing efforts to bring the enemy to an engagement, and by the necessity of repairing into the harbour of Brest. How it will be possible to carry on the expedition in the autumn is yet undetermined, and it will be perhaps delayed till next spring. The ministry seem very anxious for acting this campaign.

"The blow, which the enemy have sustained in the East Indies, has been very severely felt by them; and by their negotiations in Europe they cannot procure allies. Count d'Estaing's arrival on the American coast will, I hope, have produced such an effect as we earnestly desire. How thoroughly concerned, how truly unhappy I am, in being confined to mere wishes. Congress, from the knowledge they have of my sentiments, will better feel for me than I can myself express. The furlough they were pleased to give me was unlimited. No one could imagine the campaign would take such a turn, and till the month of June I was in hopes of rendering myself in this part of the world of more immediate use to the United States. The expedition against England was afterwards fixed upon, and my services were thought useful to my country and the common cause. I hope Congress will approve of my conduct. Whatever may be the success of the campaign in America, it will certainly bring on new projects for the ensuing year.

"If there is any thing in France, concerning which, not only as a soldier, but as a politician, or in any other capacity, I can employ my exertions to the advantage of the United States, I hope it is unnecessary to say, that I shall seize the happy opportunity, and bless the fortunate hour, which shall render me useful to those, whom I love with all the ardor and frankness of my heart. With the warm feelings of one, whose first ambition and delight are to be known in this age, and to be called in ages to come, *a lover of America*, and with the highest regard for your Excellency, I have the honor to be, &c."

LAFAYETTE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Havre, 7 October, 1779.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"Contrary winds have much delayed an expedition, which I think should have been undertaken much sooner. The Kings of France and Spain seem desirous of carrying it on before the winter. It may, however, be deferred till next spring, and the siege of Gibraltar would be the only land expedition for the present campaign. In some weeks' time, when West India successes will be compared to those of Europe, my predictions will have a greater degree of certainty; but one needs not be a conjuror to see, that England is in such a way, that a happy peace, blessed with American independence, will this or the ensuing campaign be the certain effect of the present war.

"As my private circumstances are somewhat interesting to your friendship, I will tell you, my dear General, that since my last letter I have always been in this place, where head-quarters had been fixed. I was to disembark with the grenadiers, forming the vanguard, and therefore one of the first, who was to land on the English shore. The King's own regiment of dragoons, which he gave me on my return, was to embark at Brest, and join us a few days after the landing. From Count d'Estaing's expedition on the American coast, the nation has great expectations, and very impatiently waits for intelligence. How unhappy I am to find myself so far from you on such an occasion, you will easily conceive. The feeling of sorrow, which such a thought gives me, cannot be alleviated but by the sense I have, that the general opinion as to the turn, which warlike operations would take this campaign, the calls of my duty towards my own country, where my services have been employed for the expedition against England, and the hope I entertained of being more useful to the United States here, did not leave me a choice as to the part I should take. I hope, my dear Sir, that you will agree in opinion with me.

"Whatever may be Count d'Estaing's success in America, it will bring on new projects and operations. My ideas I laid before your Excellency at Fishkill, but permit me to tell you again how earnestly I wish to join you. Nothing could delight me so much as the happiness of finishing the war under your orders. Be certain, my dear General, that in any case, in any situation, whether I act as a French or an American officer, my first wish, my first pleasure, will

be to serve again with you. However happy I am in France, however well treated by my country and King, I have acquired such a habit of being with you, and am tied to you, to America, to my fellow-soldiers, by such an affection, that the moment when I shall sail for your country will be one of the happiest of my life.

"As there is but little time to write before the sailing of the vessel, I cannot commend myself to the friends I have in the army, unless your Excellency will be pleased to make to them a thousand compliments from one, who heartily loves them, and whose first wish is to be again in their company. I congratulate you on the spirited expedition of Stony Point, and am glad it has added new lustre to our arms. Be so kind, my dear friend, as to present my best respects to your lady. Mine begs leave to be kindly remembered to you and to her.

"How happy should I be to embrace you again. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, my good and beloved General, your affectionate friend, "LAFAYETTE"

END OF VOL. VI.

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